■ Entertainment / A2-1

Claudine says BIR has nothing on her

■ World / A8

Pope vows to defend faith against 'fashionable' ideas

■ Sports / A26

Israeli, Japanese athletes dominate Subic Triathlon

■ Business / B1

High-risk bank promos alarm regulators

■ Lifestyle / C1

Terra cotta town rises in Dumaguete

More obese women, more male smokers, study says

BABAE MAN O LALAKE, DI-LIGTAS SA STROKE!

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHEN it comes to obesity, women outweigh the men in the Philippines. But when it comes to smoking, the men smoke

MORE/ A7

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Plane carrying skydivers crashes; 4 killed, 2 hurt

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Nikko Dizon

CALAMBA CITY—A Cessna 207 airplane carrying skydivers crashed yesterday in a coconut plantation in Tanauan City, Batangas, killing four of the six people on board, police said.

PLANE/ A7

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, May 9, 2005 ★★ 72 pages 7 sections Vol. 20 No. 150 P18
website: www.inq7.net

AFP defends ₱19-M sidewalk renovation

Abu deputy affirms 'wisdom of chief'

By Luige A. del Puerto

SHOULD one question "the wisdom of the chief" who thinks upgrading the sidewalks of Camp Aguinaldo will benefit everyone, and the project involved no hanky-panky?

Taking that line, the Armed Forces leadership yesterday parried criticism that the renovation of the camp's sidewalks was outlandish, when combat soldiers in Mindanao were not getting their rice allowance.

"To determine a priority project is the prerogative of the command," said Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, AFP deputy chief of staff, as he defended the P19-million project approved by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu.

"It's questioning the wisdom of the commander. That is why he is there—to determine what to prioritize," Adan said.

An INQUIRER report, quoting a group of enlisted men, said the project to replace the sidewalks with "decorative paving blocks" had provoked grumbling among soldiers and civilian employees at the camp.

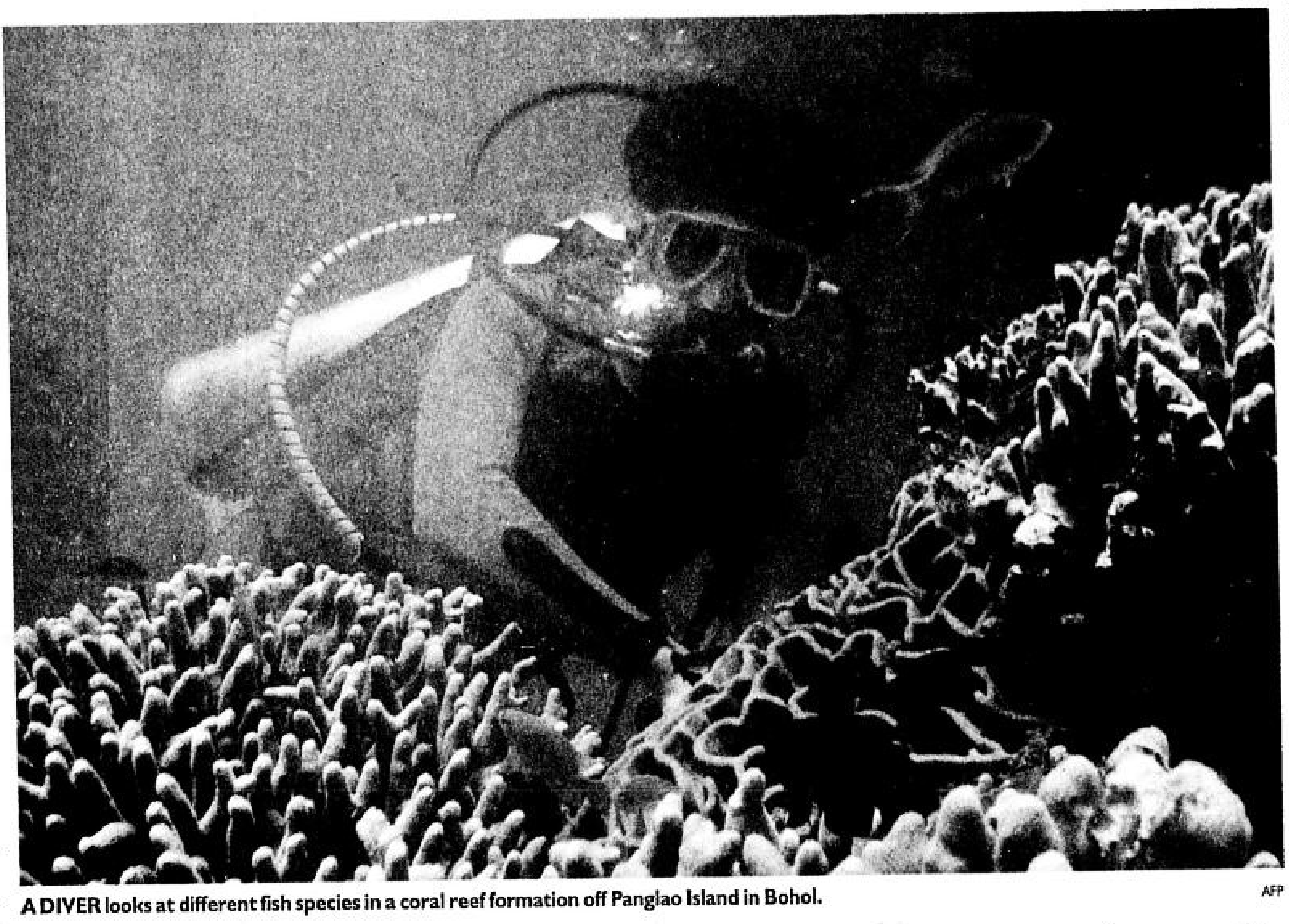
Adan said he knew about the plan since all projects passed through his office. But he insisted that there was nothing wrong with it.

"There is no hanky-panky here," he told the INQUIRER.

"*Bitak-bitak na* (The sidewalks are badly cracked)," Adan said. "Rather than just do a patching job, why not fix the whole thing and use better materials?"

He added: "This would benefit

AFP DEFENDS/ A6



A DIVER looks at different fish species in a coral reef formation off Panglao Island in Bohol. AFP

German is guardian of Bohol's coral reefs

PANGLAO ISLAND, Bohol—Holger Horn looks out across the tranquil waters off Panglao Island and says: "It wasn't always like this ... quiet and peaceful."

When the former German Army officer first arrived on this tropical island four years ago, he thought he had found his little piece of paradise among the gently swaying palms, white beaches and crystal clear waters that surround the island.

But not all was as it appeared in the popular diving resort.

"When I came here four years ago dynamite fishing was rampant," Horn says. "And as you know, diving and dynamite fishing do not belong together. So I started to fight back."

The tall and athletic Berliner, now 45, is an unlikely guardian of the coral colonies of the Southeast Asian archipelago. Some of the most spectacular formations can be found off Panglao and the nearby islands of Balicasag and Pamilacan.

A dive instructor by day, Horn doubles as a board member of the Bohol Islands Marine Triangle program funded by the UN Development Program to conserve the marine life of the Bohol Sea, a major highway for the transoceanic traffic of sea creatures from giant whales to tiny krill.

GERMAN/ A4

DIVE S
Cabilao
BOHOL
Tagbilaran
Panglao
10
11
12
13

GERMAN conservationist Holger Horn points out the island's dive sites. AFP

Farmers' takeover of coconut firms urged

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Christine O. Avendaño

NO LONGER content with the call for the abolition of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF) and the immediate return of the coconut levy fund to the coconut farmers, two militant groups proposed the takeover of levy-funded companies by coconut farmers' organizations.

The proposal was advanced by the Unyon ng Mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (Uma), the biggest agricultural labor union in the country, and the militant fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya).

Uma and Pamalakaya identified the companies as Southern Luzon Coconut Oil Mills, Legazpi Oil, Cagayan de Oro Oil, Davao Gulf Oil, Granexport Corp., Iligan Bay Oil Mill, Mindanao Coconut Oil Mills, Philagro Edible Oil Inc., San Pablo Manufacturing Corp., Southern Island Oil Mill and Indophil Oil Mills.

The call for the takeover of the companies came following the controversy sparked by the admission of CIIF president and chief executive officer Rolando Golez that he had enjoyed generous benefits since taking the helm at the sequestered company.

Golez said last week that he had received a sport utility vehicle, traveled abroad with his wife using company funds and enjoyed other perks as head of CIIF, which serves as the private custodian of some P140 billion in coconut levy funds.

The funds, mostly invested in San Miguel Corp. shares, are public in nature, according to the courts.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin yesterday said her staff would start looking this week into the compliance by the CIIF with the austerity directive issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"It appears that the CIIF may have gone beyond the austerity directive. So we will find out how this came about, pinpoint responsibility and make the appropriate recommendations," Boncodin said.

In a joint statement, leaders of Uma and Pamalakaya said the ownership and operation of the

FARMERS'/ A6

Dogs unleash protest against cruelty

G LANG
AONG PAB
ter)
WHY DO YOU KILL
PO
415

DOGS' DAY. A Dalmatian (left) and a pack of Huskies (right) join thousands of dogs of different breeds in the first "Dog Walk for a Cause" on Roxas Boulevard in Manila and in 20 provinces.

By Marlet D. Salazar

THOUSANDS of dogs and their owners yesterday unleashed a protest against cruelty to canines.

The Philippine Canine Club Inc. (PCCI), a dog owners and breeders association, organized the first "Dog Walk for a Cause (Luv ko c Bantay)" to allow dog lovers to protest "the senseless cruelty and indiscriminate slaughter of dogs."

Expecting a modest 1,000-2,000 dogs to converge at the Rajah Sulayman Park in Malate, Manila, PCCI president Byron San Pedro was surprised and pleased at the record turnout of 3,075 registrants.

Another 4,000 showed up in at least 20 provinces.

In total, more than 7,000 dogs registered nationwide for the walk, the PCCI said, breaking the world record set on June 20, 2004, in England, when 5,017 canines turned up for a 4.8-km marathon. It now qualifies to enter the Guinness Book of Records.

The club claimed there was widespread cruelty to dogs in the Philippines, citing media reports of dogs kept in cramped cages and slaughtered to be sold as meat, of stray dogs being shot to death, and others being roasted alive.

San Pedro said the dog walk was held to raise

DOGS/ A22

GMA ouster calls echo nostalgia for strongman

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE PUBLIC clamor for the overthrow of the democratically elected administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo may not have a mass or military base, but what makes it dangerous is that it is taking place against the background of an increasing nostalgia for strongman rule.

The longing for a strong leader is reminiscent of the highly charged political milieu of the student, social and Left-wing unrest in the late 1960s that provided President Ferdinand Marcos the justification to declare martial law in 1972 and to dismantle Philippine democracy.

On the eve of Labor Day, retired Brig. Gen. Fortunato Abat issued an insurrectionary call for the overthrow of the government and the formation of a "transition revolutionary council" of national salvation.

Within days, a group of Catholic bishops got into the act and jumped on the strongman bandwagon, with a call for the removal of Ms Arroyo, warning that "time is running out and no force on earth can ever stop the coming deluge as the pent-up emotions of our poor suffering people [are] about to explode."

These calls represent the impatient expression of what the bishops described as the clamor for an immediate "change of system." In both calls, neither the Abat demand promulgated by a cabal of retired military officers nor that of the bishops offered a credible alternative to the much-reviled leadership they seek to replace.

The failure to offer an alternative raises the question whether it would be a change for the better or the remedy they prescribe would

GMA OUSTER/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MONDAY, MAY 9, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Light to moderate winds blowing from the east and southeast will prevail over Luzon and Visayas and coming from the east and northeast over Mindanao. The coastal waters throughout the archipelago will be slight to moderate.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY, ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/05/09/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

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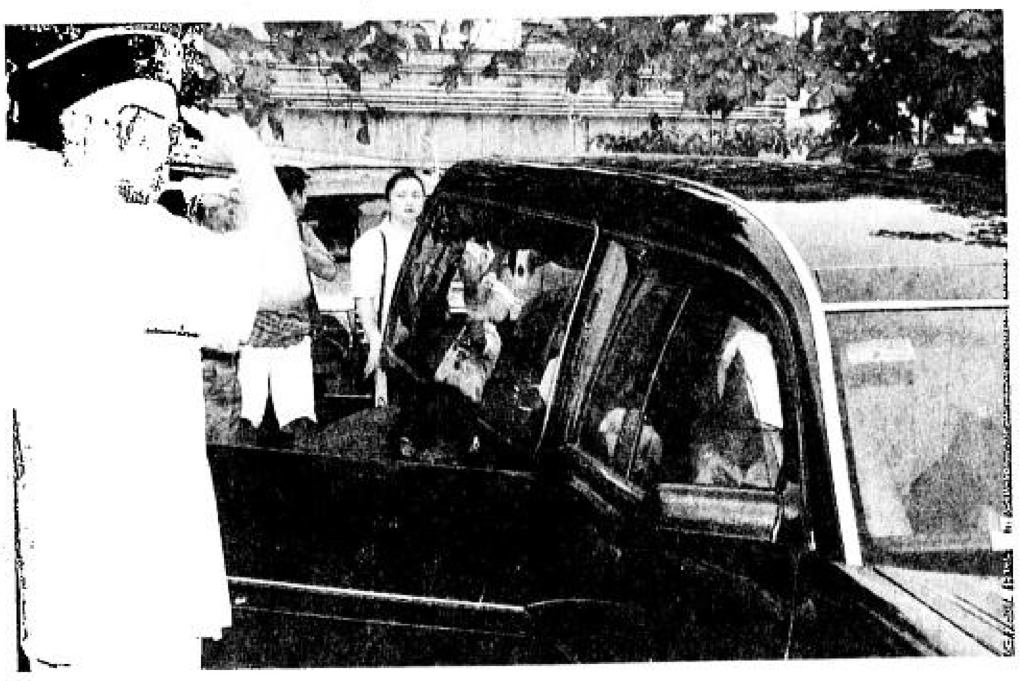


FINAL SALUTE An old colleague salutes as the body of Japanese fighter, communist leader and Huk supremo Luis Taruc is taken to Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City for burial yesterday. Taruc died on May 4 at the age of 92. Standing behind the hearse is Tina Taruc, a granddaughter.

RUDY ESPERAS

Senate panel OKs bicameral report on VAT

By TJ Burgonio

THE "FINAL VERSION" of the bicameral conference committee report on the value-added tax (VAT) was finally approved by a majority of the Senate panel, paving the way for the crucial revenue measure's smooth ratification by Congress after nearly two weeks of deadlock.

Sen. Ralph Recto, head of the nine-man Senate panel, and Senators Manuel Villar Jr., Rodolfo Biazon, Richard Gordon and Edgardo Angara signed the bicam report over the weekend, an administration senator disclosed yesterday.

"It's good as approved," Gordon said in a phone interview, confirming the measure's approval by the five senators. "We have to move on. Every day that we lose [in not approving the bill], the deficit will rise."

Recto confirmed in a text message the approval of the bicam report by a majority of the Senate panel, adding that Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who had earlier vehemently opposed granting President Macapagal-Arroyo a standby authority to raise the VAT rate, also signed the bicam report.

But opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said he would question the approval of the report, pointing out that this fell "outside the accepted legislative process."

"There was no bicam that was held; it was a mini-bicam without the authority of the full bicam. I'm going to question that on the floor," Osmeña said in a phone interview.

The bicam report on the VAT, drafted by Recto and Rep. Jesli Lapus last week to finally break the stalemate, proposes to retain the VAT at 10 percent but grants the President a standby authority to raise the rate to 12 percent starting in January 2006, according to Gordon.

Lapus, head of the House bicam panel, circulated the report for the signatures of congressmen over the weekend, Gordon said. "If the majority of the House members sign it, it's finished," he said.

If approved by the majority of both the Senate and House panels, the bicameral VAT report, which some call a "compromise version," would be submitted to the bicameral conference committee for ratification, senators said.

The bicam report, however, proposes two conditions under which a standby authority can be granted the President: If the VAT collection is 2.8 percent more than the gross domestic product and if the consolidated public sector deficit is 1.5 percent more than the GDP.

The report also proposes to lift the exemptions enjoyed by power, oil and other previously exempted sectors, and to do away with the no-pass-through provision written into both the Senate and House versions, Gordon said.

It also adopts the Senate proposal to raise the corporate income tax from 32 to 35 percent, he said.

Señeres may take case to high court

HE'S NOT only staying put, he's also ready to seek the backing of the Supreme Court.

Should the President insist on transferring administrative control of the National Labor Relations Commission to the labor department, its chair Roy Señeres would take the matter all the way to the high tribunal.

Maintaining that President Macapagal-Arroyo's order was illegal, Señeres said he would not take part in an act that violated the Labor Code.

"No one can force me to implement an illegal act. If I am forced, I will bring this to the Supreme Court," he said.

Señeres earlier said that under the Labor Code, he had the sole administrative power to run the NLRC, a body that decides labor disputes.

"The law can't be amended by an executive order," he said yesterday.

Señeres said that pushing through with the unlawful transfer would be grounds for the President's impeachment and could send him and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas to jail.

He said the illegal act would begin when he and Sto. Tomas begin to draft the implementing rules for the order.

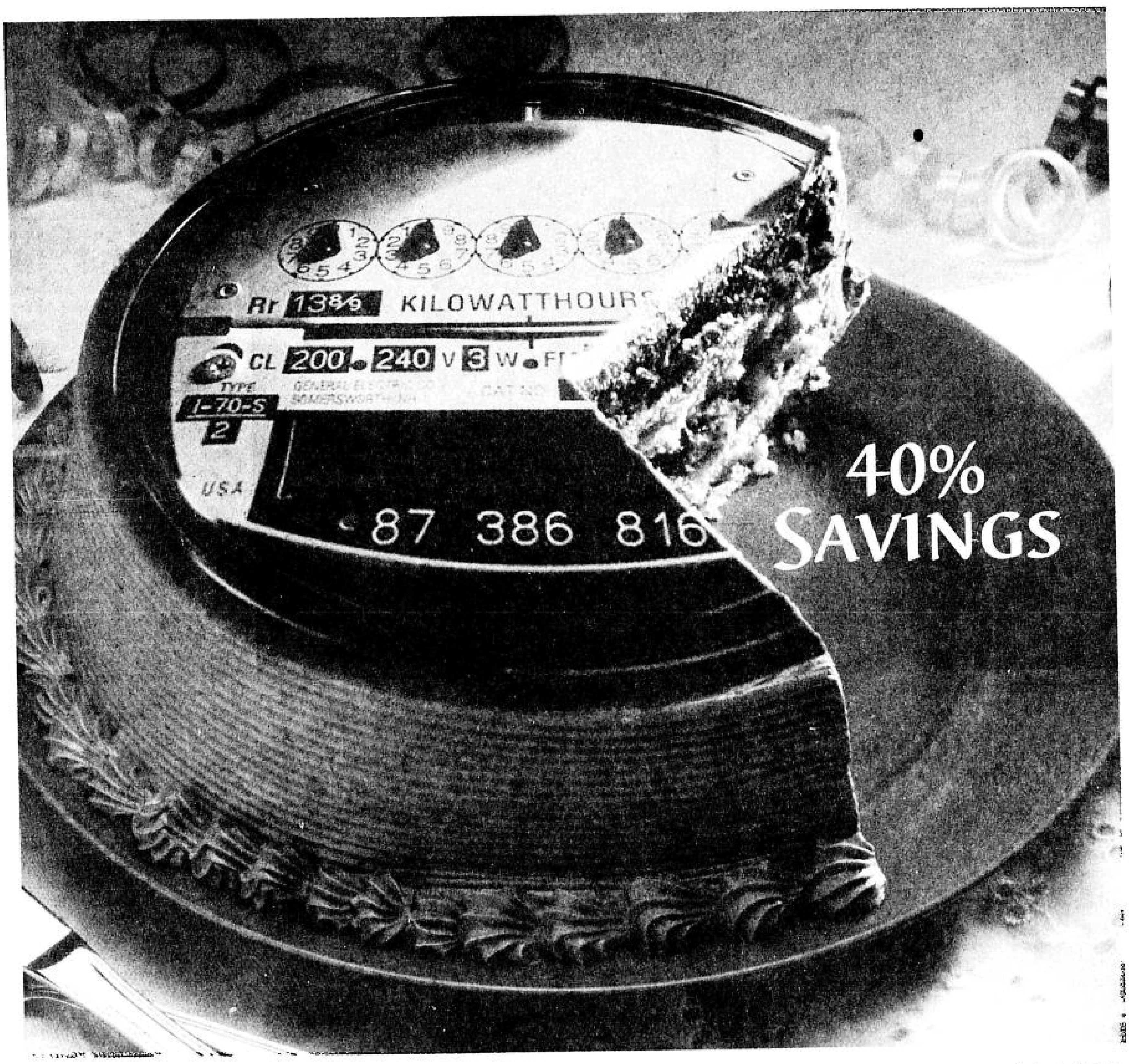
"Once we do that, we have done something illegal. Secretary Sto. Tomas and I could go to jail. Not only that, this could be used as grounds to impeach the President," he said.

The President announced her decision to transfer administrative control of the NLRC to Sto. Tomas during the Labor Day celebration in Malacañang, an event to which Señeres said he was not invited despite his holding Cabinet rank and heading a labor body.

The announcement also came shortly after the President allegedly told labor leaders that Señeres was plotting to destabilize her administration. The NLRC chair has denied the allegation.

Leila B. Salaverria

WITH THE INCREASE IN POWER RATES...



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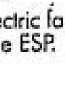

Plug an electric fan set to on to the ESP.

2

Set the aircon timer to the desired number of hours.

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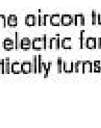
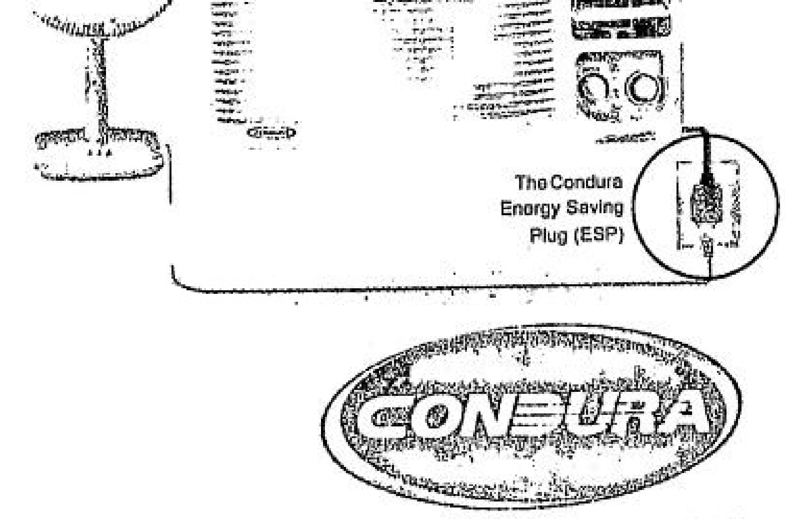


When the aircon turns off, the electric fan automatically turns on.



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Ex-inmate tells of 'VIPs, takal, bingo, basag' in book on jail

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHAT ails Philippine jails?

A former Quezon City jail inmate acquitted in a fraternity murder case has made disturbing revelations about the country's system of penology in a book titled "Freedom and Death Inside the Jail."

The book by Raymund Narag, a former fratman from the University of the Philippines, touches on key issues—from the special treatment of inmates, the inhumane conditions in the jail, to corruption—based on his experience as an inmate.

He spent six years, nine months and four days in the cramped QC jail until his acquittal in the death of Dennis Ventura in a fraternity rumble at the UP in 1994.

With little financial support from the government, the QC jail is forced to take contributions from moneyed inmates to keep the facility running.

This gives "rise to the very important *preso* (VIP) system" which is now the "norm" at the jail, Narag wrote

Dubbed the "geese that lay golden eggs," Chinese-Filipino inmates in particular "contribute significantly to the expenses at the jail like the transportation expenses of the guards," Narag said.

"They could be called upon anytime to donate for the painting of the jail buildings and fences, the purchase of water equipment, and many other projects," he said.

The rich inmates, in turn, enjoy "privileges" such as private space in the jail annex and being excused from chores like cleaning toilets.

"To an outsider, this is corruption," Narag told the INQUIRER. "But within the jail culture, there is really nothing wrong with this because the jail needs money to survive."

Lack of personnel and programs for the inmates' personal development has resulted in an organizational structure complete with its own judicial system, according to Narag.

There is the *pyansador*, a supposedly well-connected person who works on inmates' bail for a fee ranging from P4,000 to P5,000.

The inmates practically run their own show.

They assemble into *pangkats* or groups that are "constantly at each other's throats," Narag said. Those with no affiliations belong to a *querna* or "outsiders" group.

Within the jail is a system of justice that requires all inmates to strictly abide by the *patakaran* or rules.

Depending on their violation and sentence, inmates could be locked up in a *bartolina* or solitary cell, stripped of their group affiliation and have their tattoos removed with a hot iron. They could also suffer the *takal* or being whacked with a paddle.

The worst punishment is the *bingo* or death sentence imposed through the *basag* or "skull-breaking flogging," Narag wrote.

Philhealth cards an election ploy, charge militants

A MILITANT group yesterday accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of using PhilHealth cards as a ploy to attract voters during the 2004 election campaign.

"The cards were given out for free to the people, but after a short time, they expired. Why does it work like that? The cards were just used for the campaign," Migrante chair Connie Regalado said in a phone interview.

Regalado said it could mean that the President was not really sincere in her efforts to help the poor.

"With the loss of hundreds of millions and the raiding of overseas Filipino workers funds for PhilHealth, we cannot but say that this regime is not really out to give health care to the people," she said.

The PhilHealth cards, which bear Ms Arroyo's picture, stirred a controversy when they were given out during the election campaign, despite explanations from Malacañang that the distribution was part of the President's commitment to providing health care to poor Filipinos.

On Friday, Philippine Health Insurance Corp. president Francisco Duque III said holders of the health cards had only until July to reenroll in the National Health Insurance Program under the indigent members category.

Regalado also assailed the alleged transfer of P530 million from the OFW medicare trust fund handled by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to PhilHealth last March. She said the transfer was made possible by Executive Order No. 392.

"We wonder if this transfer was aimed at keeping up the glowing figures that Duque always proclaims in media interviews and congressional inquiries regarding PhilHealth's efficiency," she said.

Regalado voiced concerns about the administration of PhilHealth, citing reports quoting Duque as saying that its P520 million in losses from fraudulent claims constituted only about four percent of its P52 billion in earnings and that the losses were lower than those incurred by PhilHealth's forerunner, Medicare.

"There is definitely something wrong with PhilHealth if P520 million gets lost to fraudulent claims. How can claims be accessed without top-level approval?" she said. *Leila B. Salaverria*

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German is guardian of Bohol coral reefs

From page A1

For his efforts, Horn has won an honorary commission in the Philippine Coast Guard.

"In the beginning, nobody cared. Then I took over to care for the reefs and now you can see great areas of improvement. It's really wonderful to see how nature is rebuilding," Horn says.

Compared to those of many other countries, "the diversity of the Philippine coral reefs is still quite in the upper level," he adds.

Last year, a French-led research team identified some 1,200 different species of crabs and shrimps and around 6,000 mollusk species in the waters off Panglao, many of them not previously known to science.

But pressure from fishing fleets and marine tourism, funneled into Panglao from major tourist gateways like nearby Cebu City, have put the vast underwater gardens in jeopardy.

Dynamite fishing

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources says the destruction of the reefs—breeding grounds and sanctuaries for many of the creatures of the sea—went into overdrive in the 1970s when fishermen tossed dynamite or poison into the water to stun or blind the fish.

Some of the damage was not even deliberate.

"There are types of corals that grow about 10 centimeters in one year. So for example, you throw an anchor at a coral garden and you destroy two square meters. It takes five to 10 years to get it to grow back," Horn says.

From the start, conservation was an alien concept to many residents, who have fished the sea for generations.

"But the perception has changed," Horn says, a point driven home by the reality of declining catches.

"Look at them today, the marginal fishermen. They come back with a handful of fish and they can't even feed their families," he says.

The government has restricted fishing in shallow waters to small fishermen, set up community-based marine sanctuary projects, and encouraged marine tourism, including scuba diving and whale watching.

Some 15,000 scuba divers visit Panglao and the nearby islands every year, drawn by 18 established dive sites in the area.

Cultural factors

The son of a marine biologist who instilled in his son an abiding fascination with the sea, Horn says cultural factors also play a big influence in marine conservation. "I found out that the Philippines has great laws, rules and regulations and ordinances, but they really lack implementation."

One reason, he says, is that these laws are foreign to many residents. "You are dealing here with people who spent one or sometimes three years in elementary school, and sometimes they don't even know how to write properly. So how do you make them understand that these ordinances are so important?"

Even some of the rich and presumably better educated tourists disappoint him because they take trophies or souvenirs from the dive sites.

"Our base for an effective tourism industry is the coral reefs. So if we don't have intact coral reefs, the resorts can't [attract tourists] and will have to close down," he says.

Within the project site, only traditional means of fishing are now allowed. Permanent buoys are planned so vessels would stop using destructive anchors in the protected site.

Zoning survey

The Bohol Islands Marine Triangle Board is supervising a zoning survey to delineate which areas to declare as sanctuaries, fishing areas, tourism sections or navigational corridors.

Also planned are a user-fee scheme under which every scuba diver would be charged P50, and boats that damage corals by indiscriminately dropping anchors would be fined. Proceeds would pay for fish wardens to guard the sanctuaries and support communities involved in the project.

The Panglao municipal council also passed an ordinance requiring new restaurants or hotels to put up proper waste disposal systems.

Horn says Panglao is learning its lessons from Boracay, another world-famous island resort in Western Visayas that hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons a few years back due to *E. coli* bacteria infection of the water.

Horn, who runs his dive shop with his Japanese girlfriend, says he loves the Philippines and hopes to "settle down" in Panglao eventually.

"It's more than the diving actually. I like the culture. The Filipino culture is quite easy-going. The climate is quite nice. The people are normally nice and friendly and cheerful."

AFP

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DENR sacks 4 officials who failed to deliver

By Blanche S. Rivera

FOUR officials of key environment agencies were relieved of their posts for failing to show clear accomplishments.

Forest Management Bureau Director Romeo Acosta, Environmental Management Bureau Director Julian Amador, Mining and Geosciences Bureau Director Horacio Ramos and Land Management Bureau Director Concordio Zuniga were dismissed on Wednesday.

They will be reporting to various undersecretaries of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources starting next week.

In separate DENR special orders issued on May 4, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said the revamp was "part of the continuing organizational development" in the department.

Defensor said the DENR needed the change to make the agency more effective in pursuing the program of action of his administration.

"It was a management decision. I have nothing against the people in the respective bureaus, but I feel that there should be a change," Defensor told reporters in a phone interview Friday.

Appointed officers-in-charge vice the relieved officials were Defensor's head executive assistant Lolibeth Medrano to the EMB, Marcial Amaro Jr. to the FMB and Allan Barcena to the LMB.

Environment Assistant Secretary Jeremias Dolino was appointed concurrent director of the MGB.

"I have told my people that promotions, placement of positions will be based on performance and accomplishments because the DENR has... so many abstract directions. Accomplishments should be very clear," Defensor said.

He said more changes should be expected in the agency when he moves to implement his program of action with detailed target result areas, like the enforcement of the Clean Air Act.

"We have not made a dent in this," Defensor had lamented earlier.

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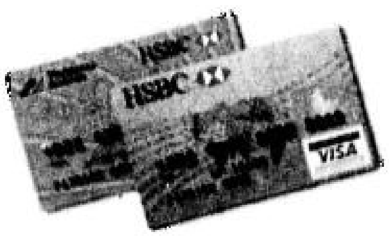

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AFP defends P19-M sidewalk renovation

From page A1

everyone and the price is reasonable."

The project includes renovating the walkways' roofing which is also deteriorating, according to Adan.

He said the military had been getting a lot of complaints, some from retired officers, that jogging in the area had become an arduous effort because of the sidewalks' condition.

So Abu decided to do something about it.

Rice and sidewalks

The complaining group of soldiers said the project was unnecessary and extravagant.

"It shows General Abu's double standard implementation of austerity," said a soldier representing the group.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Abu approved the project on April 20, and that P5 million had been initially released as early as January to fund it.

Adan said the issues of renovating the sidewalks and the rice allowance were distinct from each other.

"It has nothing to do with this," he said. "The request for [rice allowance] is so huge that the national government has no budget for it. It was removed during the time of [now retired AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso] Abaya, not during Abu's time."

Adan also said that at the time the rice allowance program was first implemented, other soldiers had complained it was discriminatory because only those in Mindanao received the allowance.

Allowance is for all

He said the military was now lobbying to increase the soldiers' subsistence allowance from P60 to P120 per day.

"This would be better since everybody would receive it," he said. He did not say when the soldiers would get the increase, pointing out that this would need legislation.

He also said Adm. Ariston de los Reyes, AFP vice chief of staff, did not "question the [sidewalks upgrading] plan."

Abu should know

"He [De los Reyes] just asked if there were other projects that [could be attended to] first," he said.

"General Abu—and he is in a position to know—explained to him, after checking our resources, that there was funding for other projects," Adan said.

In his marginal note on a memo [on the project] from Adan, De los Reyes had written: "Demolishing the present sidewalks and replacing them with paving blocks for aesthetic purposes may not be in keeping with the times.

"Recommend consider the option repairing buildings instead, say government quarters at Camp Aguinaldo and others," De los Reyes added.

NO HANKY-PANKY in project to upgrade this shaded walkway in Camp Aguinaldo, according to AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan. VAL HANDUMON

The sidewalks to be repaired run along De Jesus Avenue, starting from General Capinpin Avenue to General Santos Avenue, and the length of Segundo Avenue, starting from Capinpin to Guido Avenue, behind the GHQ building.

Probe urged

Demolition of the sidewalks has been ongoing since last month.

Refusing to take the matter sitting down, Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano urged Congress to conduct an inquiry into the project.

"Here comes another multimillion-peso scandal in the Armed Forces of the Philippines," said Mariano, a member of the House committee on national defense.

Wasteful spending

"Even if the military spends multibillion pesos for Camp Aguinaldo's facelift, they cannot easily cloak the AFP's fascist image and long list of human rights violations," Mariano said.

The militant fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas likened the renovation to the "lavish beautification projects [during the Marcos era which involved the] senseless expenditure of public funds."

Such a display of "extravagance" should be condemned by taxpayers, it said. *With reports from Philip Tubeza and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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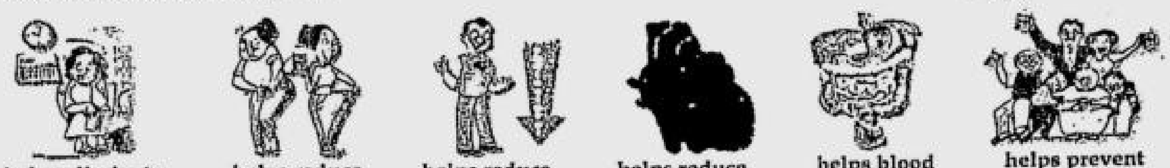

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Farmers' takeover . . .

From page A1

coconut levy-funded oil mills should be transferred to coconut farmers' organizations.

They said the coconut oil mills were purchased using the levy forcibly collected by the Marcos regime from millions of small coconut farmers.

"The takeover of coconut-funded oil mills by the small coconut farmers' groups and cooperatives for their own national and collective interests is politically necessary, socially just and morally upright," Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said.

Roy Morilla, Uma national coordinator, said the coconut oil mills were part of the conglomerate known as United Coconut Mills (Unicom), which was initiated and later controlled by Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and other associates of Marcos.

Acquisition of oil mills

"The Filipino coconut farmers have the right to declare to the public that these coconut oil mills belong to them and that they have the political and economic right to utilize these mills free of charge because these are products of their hard labor—nothing more, nothing less," Morilla said.

Hicap said a total of $136 million from the coconut levy fund was drawn from the CIIF in the mid-1970s to finance the purchase of the oil mills and the marketing of copra as part of the Marcos regime's program to rationalize the coconut oil milling industry.

Pamalakaya and Uma urged small coconut farmers' associations to resist attempts by the President, top executives of the CIIF and Cojuangco to cover up their alleged crimes against them.

"Let's call a spade a spade. The acts of plunder and first-rate crimes of corruption arising from the P140-billion coconut levy fund will persist in the national government while continuously depriving the small coconut farmers of the legitimate right to the coco levy fund as long as the control of the fund remains in the hands of coconut levy syndicates and the equally bankrupt regime," they said.

Boncodin has been instructed by the President to assess the compliance by government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), government financial institutions (GFIs) and other government corporate entities with her austerity directive last year.

The President issued Administrative Order No. 103 in August 2004, directing all public entities to adopt austerity measures such as the suspension of local and foreign travels, purchase of new vehicles and media ads, trainings and seminars, creation of new positions, parties and sports events, and donations and grants.

The budget secretary said Ms Arroyo met last August with heads of the GOCCs and GFIs and their boards and told them she expected them to follow her austerity measure.

"In that meeting, I remembered distinctly that the President said that those who do not follow her directive will face the appropriate consequences," Boncodin said on RMN radio.

Time of reckoning

Now is the "time of reckoning," according to Boncodin.

She told the INQUIRER that most of the 117 GOCCs and GFIs could not afford the perks they were giving their officials because they were not making money.

Asked how soon the budget department could finish its check on CIIF, Boncodin said her office would make the proper recommendations "as soon as we can."

The other day, United Coconut Planters Bank formed a committee to review its policies and find out if officers of the CIIF, its embattled subsidiary, were enjoying excessive benefits.

Corrections

THE FINANCIAL and technical support to the Philippines by the Federal Government of Germany amounting to 73.3 million euros, reported in a story on May 8 on Page A17 (Across the Nation), was erroneously converted to pesos as P531 billion. The amount should only be P5.1 billion based on the current conversion rate of P69.9 per euro.

***

LAST Friday's story, "His children were the people, says Taruc son," on Page A1, misstated that Luis Taruc was born in Tarlac. Taruc was born in San Luis, Pampanga.

***

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Plane carrying skydivers crashes; 4 killed, 2 hurt

From page A1

The two survivors, both seriously injured, may have jumped off the plane before it burst into flames, said Tanauan police operations chief SPO2 Max Reyes.

"This is the worst news a mother could get on Mother's Day," said Air Force spokesperson Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla.

The Air Force, in a statement, identified three of the fatalities as Edgar Calvo Jr., Jimmy del Rosario and a certain Joel.

City police chief Supt. Renato Angara said the third fatality was Jose Perez.

The unidentified pilot was the fourth fatality, Angara said.

The two who survived were Francis Calvo and Ryan Barradas, one of the dive instructors whose family owned the six-seater Cessna, police said.

The Air Force said the two Calvos were sons of recently retired Philippine Air Force Maj. Gen. Edgar Calvo.

Jess Matalog, a local resident who said he saw the plane crash into a tree, described to dzBB radio what happened.

Survivor calls for help

"It got entangled in the coconut tree and immediately caught fire. Then it crashed and exploded," he said. "I saw a person gesturing and I rushed to him and immediately moved him away from the fire."

Angara said the group took off from the Barradas Airstrip in Barangay Santor, Tanauan, at around 11 a.m. for skydiving lessons.

Other witnesses told police that a few minutes after the plane was airborne, they noticed plumes of smoke coming from its tail.

Moments later, they said, the plane began flying erratically until it crashed.

Burns and bruises

Residents heard a loud explosion, Angara said.

Villagers immediately went to the area and rushed Barradas and Calvo to a nearby hospital. The two suffered bruises and burns all over their bodies. They were later brought to the Makati Medical Center.

The bodies of the four fatalities were severely burned, police said.

Crash cause unknown

"We cannot ascertain what really caused the accident. Aviation investigators are now helping us look into the incident," Angara told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The Cessna plane was registered with Chemtrad Corp., which is owned by the Barradas family. Barradas is also the company's vice president for operations.

ATO probe

Padilla said the passengers were skydivers. He said Calvo's sons were still "young."

Padilla said the airstrip was maintained by civilians and often used by aviation enthusiasts using light aircraft.

The Air Transportation Office is investigating the crash.

An Air Force Huey II helicopter flew to the crash site to assist the rescuers.

Early this year, a Chemtrad-owned plane also crashed into a mountainous area in Jomalig, Quezon, killing its pilot and a passenger.

AN AIR Force officer examines the body bags following the crash of a six-seater Cessna plane in Tanauan City. ROGER MARGALLO

More obese women, more male smokers, study says

From page A1

far more cigarettes than the women do.

So who will outlive whom? Smoking and obesity are both significant factors in a stroke or heart attack, health experts warned—and they have the figures to prove it.

About 54 percent of Filipino women and 12.1 percent of men are considered obese, according to the National Nutrition and Health Survey (NNHeS) conducted by 14 of the country's medical specialty associations and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute.

But when it comes to smoking, the reverse is true. About 56.3 percent of Filipino men and only 12.1 percent of women are considered smokers.

Risk factors

Both obesity and smoking are among the five "risk factors" for atherosclerosis or the stiffening and thickening of the blood vessels that could eventually lead to a stroke or heart attack.

Of the 4,753 respondents examined in 2003 and 2004, 17.4 percent had hypertension while 8.4 percent registered high cholesterol levels.

At least 4 percent were also diabetic as shown by their blood sugar levels and medical history, according to Dr. Dante Morales, overall chair of the NNHeS steering committee and medical director of the Manila Doctors Hospital.

"If weight is the only factor, you can say that more women are at risk of developing cardiovascular disease," Dr. Felix Punzalan, a member of the research team, told the INQUIRER.

Findings on obesity were based on "waist-hip ratio." Results using the more popular body mass index or BMI showed an average figure of only five percent for overweight Filipino men and women.

"Smoking, by far, was the most common risk factor found," Morales wrote in a summary of the study.

Heart attack

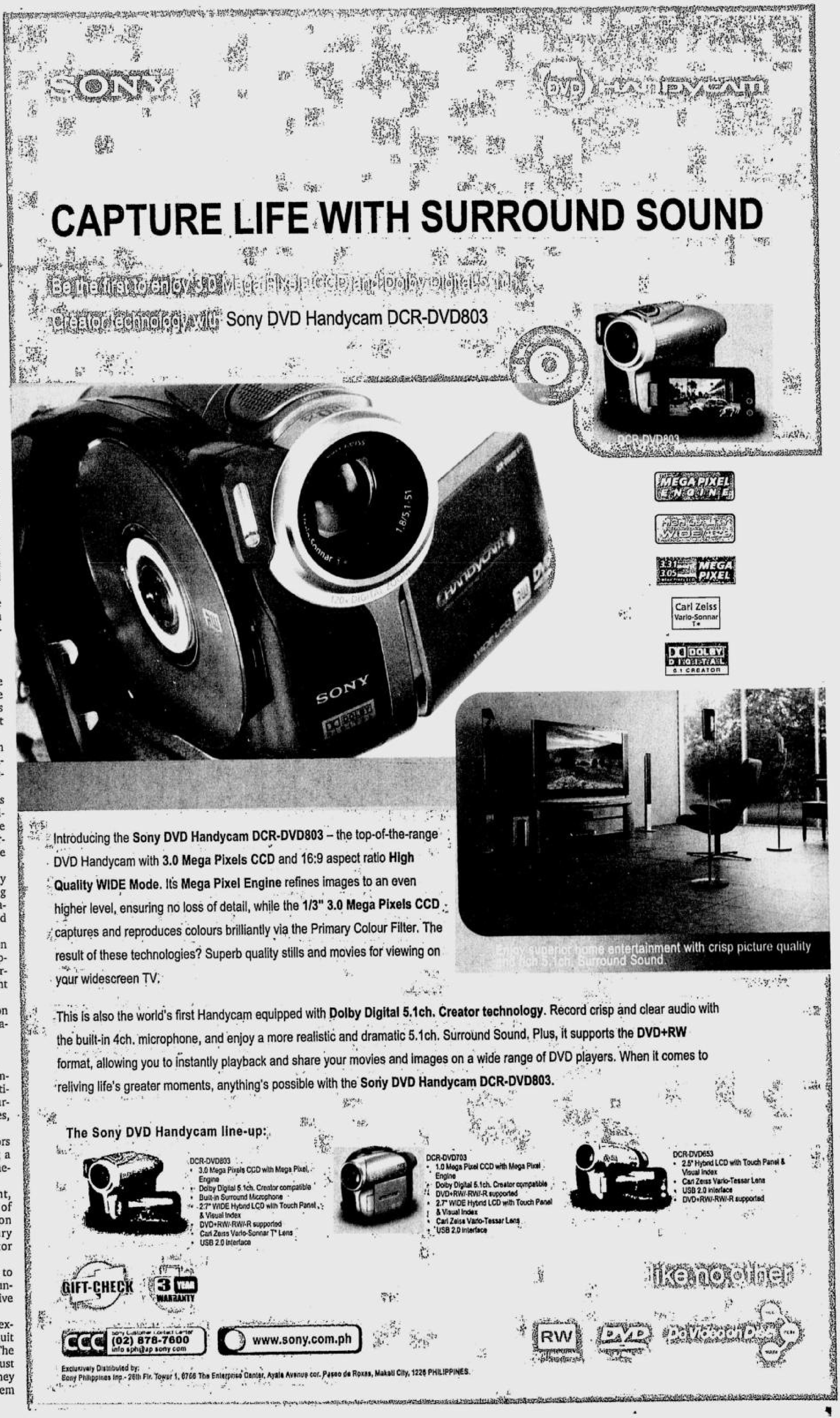
The NNHeS findings were supported by Interheart, an international study that identified at least nine risk factors for acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) in 52 countries, including the Philippines.

Having all or just a few of these risk factors means that a person is at risk of suffering a heart attack "129 times" compared to someone who does not, Morales explained.

The NNHeS was particularly important, being the most comprehensive survey of its kind, reflecting the general condition of Filipinos in terms of strokes, coronary and peripheral artery diseases, the doctor said.

And now that Filipinos have been found to be anything but safe from these diseases, Punzalan and Morales urged the public to strive for a healthy diet and lifestyle.

"People always say that medicines are expensive," Punzalan said. "But if they quit smoking, they could actually save a lot. The same is true in dealing with obesity. They just have to cut down on unhealthy food. They should also exercise. These would save them money."



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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Pope vows to shun 'fashionable' ideas

POPE Benedict XVI praying inside the Saint Mary Major Basilica in Rome May 7. REUTERS

ROME—Pope Benedict XVI pledged on Saturday to follow the strict line of his predecessor and defend traditional Catholic teachings from "fashionable" ideas that threaten to destroy the faith.

In his first sermon at St. John's in Lateran, his cathedral as the Bishop of Rome, the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger confirmed expectations that he would maintain Pope John Paul's conservative stance on issues such as homosexuality and abortion.

A pope's duty, he said, "is to ensure the word (of God) remains present in its greatness and resounds in its purity so that it is not shattered by constant changes in fashion."

The Church is battling moves in many Western countries toward policies such as allowing gay marriage and euthanasia.

The Pope made clear he would stand firm against anything that weakened traditional teachings.

"(A pope) must constantly bind himself and the Church to the obedience of the word of God in the face of all the attempts to adapt it or water it down," he told the packed congregation.

"That's what Father John Paul II did when faced by all such attempts which were seemingly benevolent toward man.

"When faced with erroneous interpretations of freedom, he unequivocally underlined the inviolability of the human being, the inviolability of human life from conception until natural death."

"The freedom to kill is not a real freedom, but a tyranny that reduces the human being to slavery," he added, in a clear condemnation of abortion and euthanasia, and had to pause while the congregation broke into applause.

Benedict's pontificate has already been marked by a struggle between the traditions of the Church and more liberal attitudes, notably in Spain which passed a law allowing gay marriages, a move which bishops told Catholics to defy.

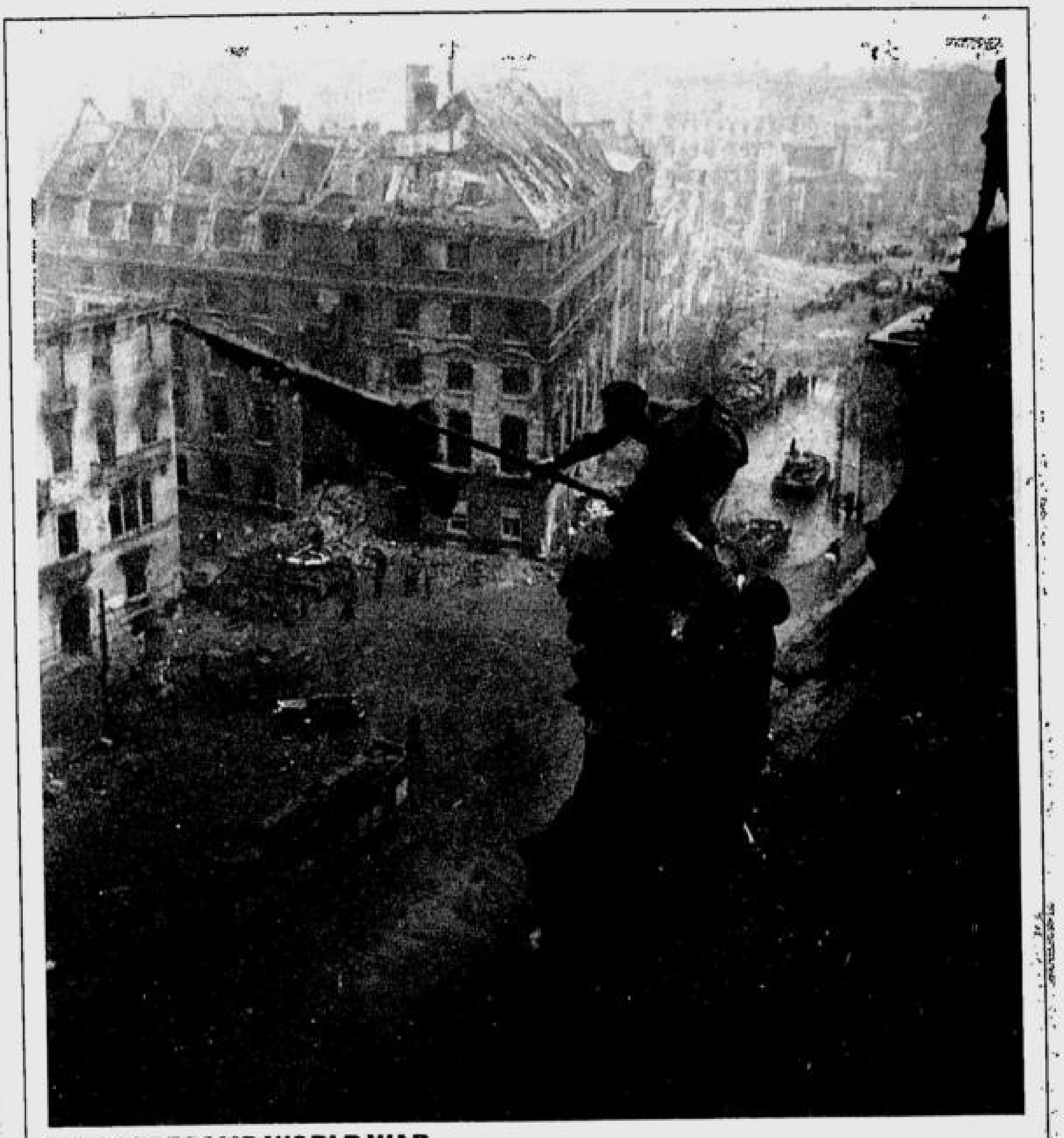
Large crowds greeted the Pope as he arrived, standing up in an open-top limousine, at the huge cathedral next to Rome's ancient city wall in the evening sunshine.

The packed congregation applauded as he walked to the altar to be ceremoniously cloaked in the vestments and miter of the Bishop of Rome—the last formal step in his becoming Pope.

The Pope, who has repeatedly stressed his humility after becoming the spiritual leader of the world's 1.1 billion Catholics, said his role was that of a servant, not a sovereign.

"The Pope is not an absolute sovereign whose thoughts and wishes are law. On the contrary, the ministry of a pope is to be the guarantor of obedience to Christ and his word," he said during a lengthy sermon.

"His power is not above, but at the service of, the word of God," said the 78-year-old Pontiff. *Reuters*



END OF SECOND WORLD WAR

Soviet soldiers hoist the red flag over the Reichstag in Berlin in this May 1945 photo made by Yevgeny Khaldei. On May 9 more than 50 world leaders will be in Moscow to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. AP

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3 killed in suicide bomb attack at Internet café in Afghanistan

KABUL—A Burma engineer working for the United Nations was among three people killed in a weekend bombing at an Internet café in Kabul, the interior ministry said Sunday, correcting an earlier statement that the dead man was from the Philippines.

The man was identified by his passport and a UN card found in his pocket, interior ministry spokesperson Lutfullah Mashal said.

"He was from Burma not from the Philippines. He was identified from his passport and UN card," Mashal said.

The explosion occurred at about 6 p.m. and destroyed the café in the Shar-i-Nao district. Blood was visible on the computers. A body blown to pieces lay by the toilet door.

"Three people were killed, including the suicide bomber, and six wounded," International Security Assistance Force spokesperson Richard Hesser said earlier.

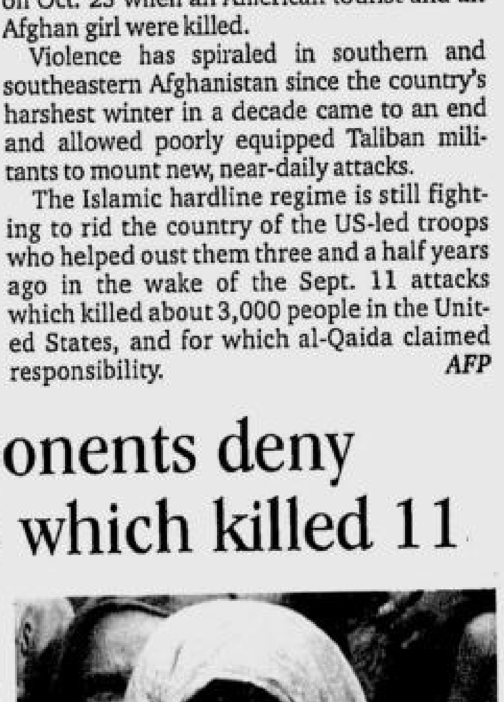
It was the first explosion in Kabul since April 24 when a car bomb detonated in a residential neighborhood, without causing any casualties. Taliban militants claimed responsibility for that incident.

The last suicide bombing in Kabul occurred on Oct. 23 when an American tourist and an Afghan girl were killed.

Violence has spiraled in southern and southeastern Afghanistan since the country's harshest winter in a decade came to an end and allowed poorly equipped Taliban militants to mount new, near-daily attacks.

The Islamic hardline regime is still fighting to rid the country of the US-led troops who helped oust them three and a half years ago in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks which killed about 3,000 people in the United States, and for which al-Qaida claimed responsibility. *AFP*

Burma junta opponents deny setting off bombs which killed 11



A BURMA refugee woman rests with her ill son near a wayside camp at Damdamia in Cox's Bazar district, 480 km south of Dhaka May 7. Nearly 13,000 Burma Muslims who have been living illegally in Bangladesh over the last decade are fighting a grim battle against starvation and disease. REUTERS

RANGOON—Opponents of Burma's military regime denied on Sunday that they were responsible for three bomb blasts that killed 11 people and wounded 162 in the worst attacks here in two decades.

The junta has blamed three ethnic rebel groups and an exiled pro-democracy group for what it called "terrorist acts" against two busy shopping malls and a trade center on Saturday in the capital, Rangoon.

The National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), which set up a government in exile after the military rejected the 1990 election victory by democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, dismissed the charge.

"We are undergoing a non-violent struggle toward democracy and we totally reject the accusation and condemn whoever is behind these bombs," Sann Aung, a senior NCGUB member in Bangkok, told Reuters.

Tensions between the junta and various ethnic rebel groups have increased following October's purge of Prime Minister Khin Nyunt, who had orchestrated more than a dozen rebel ceasefires.

Sann Aung said there was no proof that ethnic guerrillas were responsible for the nearly simultaneous bombings, the worst in the capital since a 1983 North Korean bomb attack on a visiting South Korean government delegation killed 11 people.

"We don't know exactly who was behind it. The regime may have caused this bomb blast and then blamed the opposition," Sann Aung said, referring to rumors of a power struggle within the secretive military leadership since Khin Nyunt was forced out.

The New Light of Myanmar newspaper said the bombs were hidden inside bags and triggered by timers. State television showed footage of shattered windows and debris at the malls and trade center where a big crowd was attending a Thai exhibition.

Hospital officials expected the toll, confirmed at 11 dead and 162 wounded, to rise.

Police armed with light weapons and truncheons patrolled public places on Sunday, while shocked residents gathered at Rangoon's famed Shwedagon pagoda to pray for the bomb victims.

"Today all the people here are filled with sorrow, shock and shame," U Ba Tin, a retired government employee, told Reuters.

"I never expected such a cruel thing to happen in our society. We strongly condemn whoever carried it out for whatever motive," he said. *Reuters*

'Never again': Germans lash out at neo-Nazis

BERLIN—Tens of thousands of Germans took part in a candlelight vigil against neo-Nazis that stretched across Berlin on Saturday night on the eve of ceremonies marking the end of World War II in Europe.

Undeterred by rain and cold, thousands with candles, flashlights or lanterns stood in a 33-km chain linking the far western district of Spandau with the easternmost area of Mahlsdorf and passing through the central Brandenburg Gate.

They were protesting against a march by a group of several hundred neo-Nazis planned for Sunday, the 60th anniversary of Nazi Germany's surrender.

"We want to stand up to these incorrigible people who even today are denying what happened under the Nazi rule," said Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit at the start of two days of "festival for democracy" events around the Brandenburg Gate.

"May 8, 1945 was a day of liberation for Berlin, Germany and Europe from Nazi dictatorship," he added. "This date has a lasting meaning for history—never again terror, war and genocide. We must remain vigilant."

On Sunday, President Horst Koehler will speak to a special assembly of both houses of parliament in a solemn address of remembrance for the Nazis' victims. It will also be broadcast on giant screens at the Brandenburg Gate a few hundred meters away.

The far-right NPD, or National Democratic Party, will march nearby under the motto: "60 years of lies about Germany's 'liberation'—time to put an end to the cult of guilt." Most Germans view the end of the war as a day of liberation.

The NPD had petitioned to march through the gate, the city's landmark and a symbol of German unification, and past a new national memorial to the Holocaust next to it.

But the local city government rejected the application for a rally by the group at the historically sensitive location.

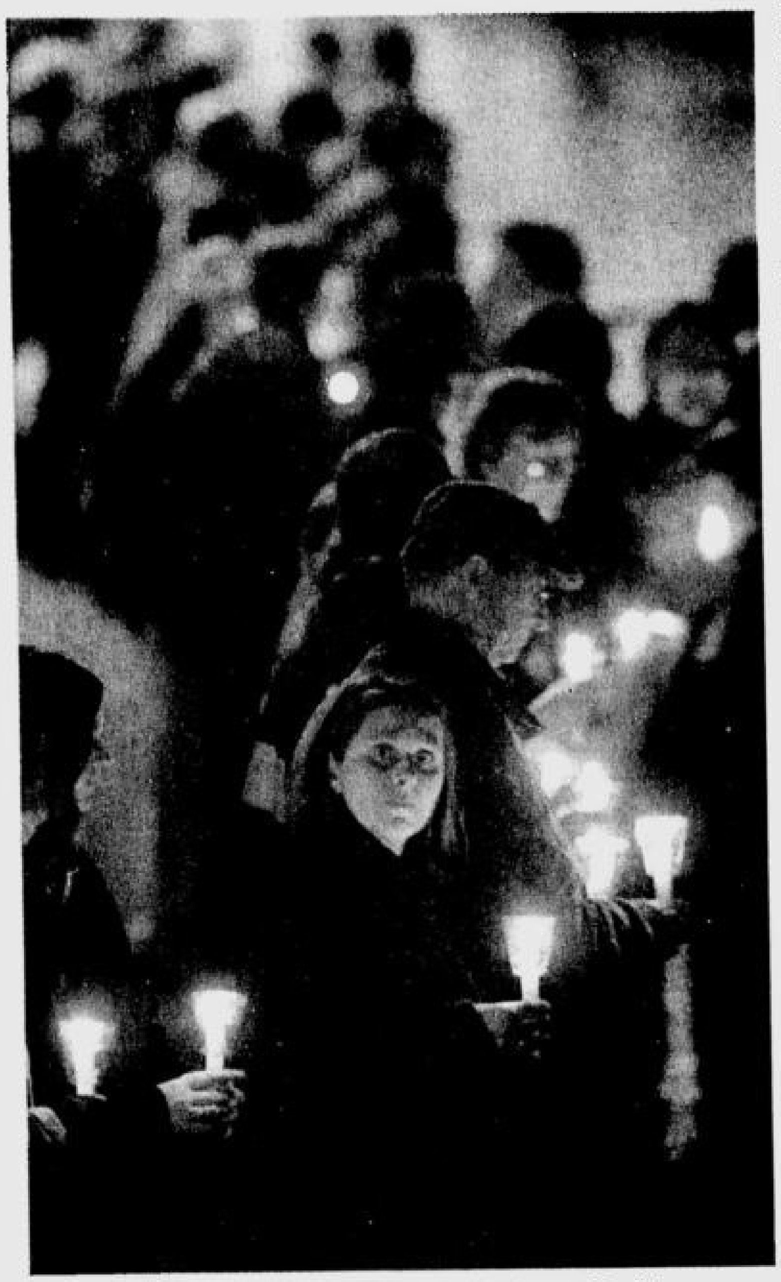
The NPD's legal challenges to that decision were rejected in a series of court decisions last week. Some 6,000 riot police are nevertheless bracing for anti-Nazi demonstrations and attempts by left-wing groups to disrupt the short NPD march.

The government has unsuccessfully tried to outlaw the NPD, but the party has skillfully exploited constitutional freedoms.

Interior Minister Otto Schily welcomed the court decisions banning the NPD from marching through Brandenburg Gate.

"It's a disgrace, just a disgrace that a party like the NPD even exists with their Nazi ideas and public appearances with symbols that recall the Nazis," he told Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

Organizers said 30,000 people took part in the chain of lights that briefly stretched across the city without interruption. While the inner city was packed with participants, some outlying parts were spread thin. *Reuters*



GERMANS hold candles during a peace rally in front of Berlin's landmark Brandenburg Gate May 7. Organized by close to 20 organizations, thousands of Berlin residents held a candle vigil stretching across the German capital Saturday night to show the world that there shall never again be another war originating from Germany. REUTERS

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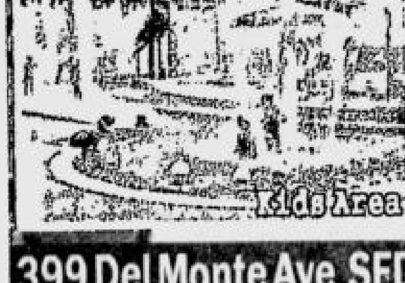

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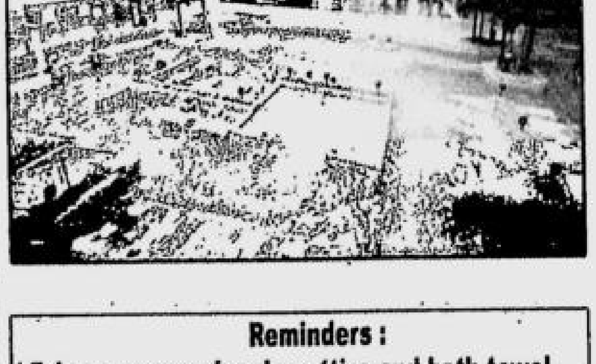

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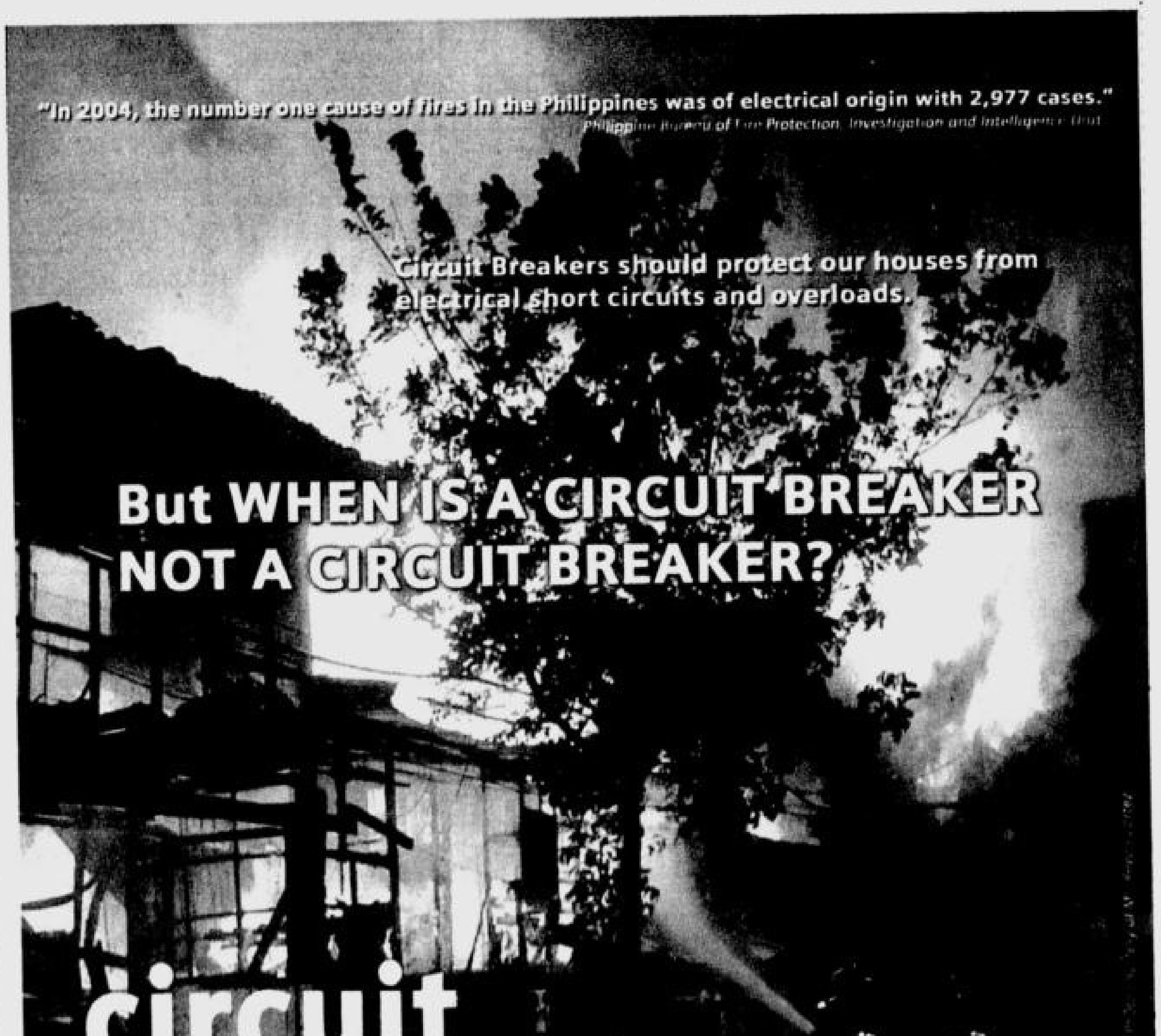

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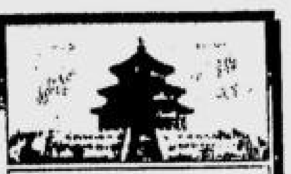

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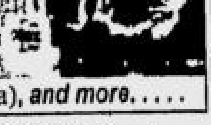

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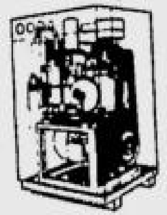

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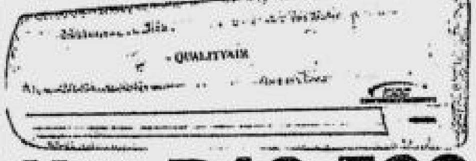

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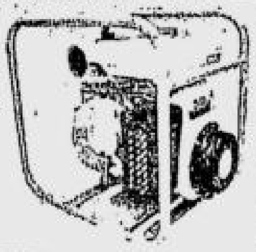

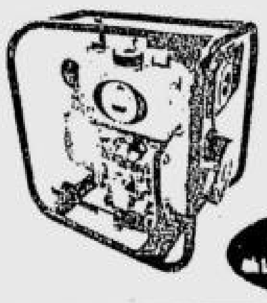

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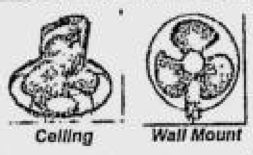

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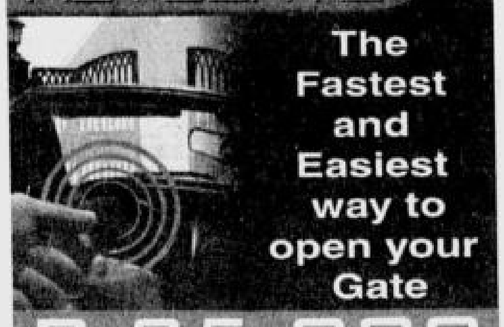

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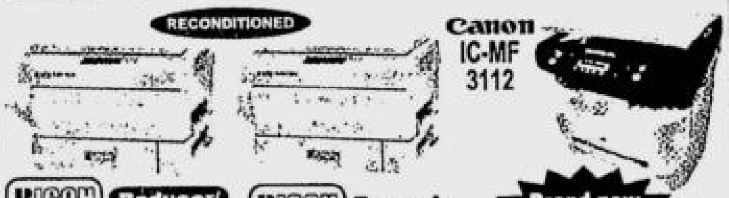

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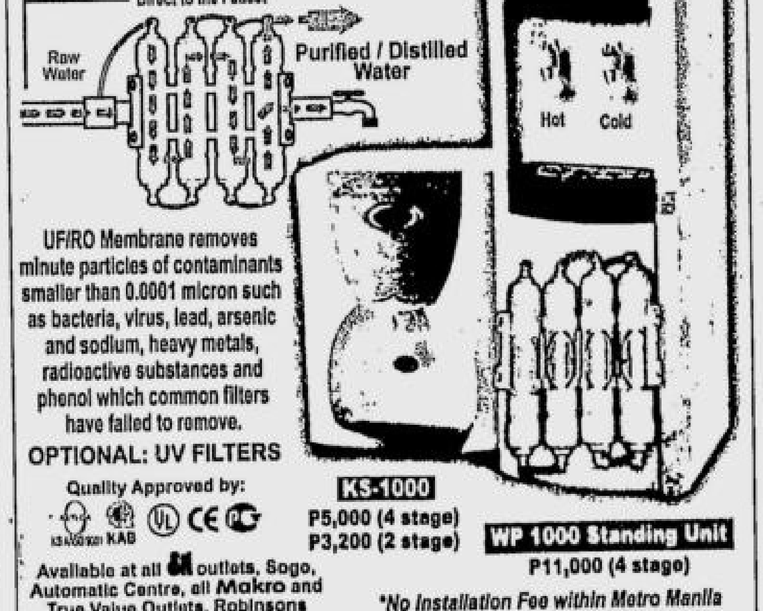

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Celebrating 27 y
service, stability &

A pioneering spirit, the wisdom to build, and a passion to serve. These are the driving forces behind Prudentialife's achievements, victory and success.

"Our success is because of the trust of our planholders and the reason why they trust us is because our company is stable."

We have good management and they have seen that even during difficult times; they never had any problems paying for the tuition of their children or getting their pension plan benefits. They don't have to worry because they know their money is safe with us..

Ambassador Francisco A. Alba
Founder and Chairman

Pioneering Spirit

Prudentialife started in May 1978, the same year when John Paul II was elected Pope. At 27 years, Prudentialife remembers how the commitment to serve started with the founder's vision, which has resulted into a combination of corporate growth, market leadership, and above all, honor in the pre-need and financial services industry.

Wisdom to Build

Prudentialife provides peace of mind, a bright future and secure life to every planholder. It is continually inspired by unconditional testimonials of others whose lives, entrusted to Prudentialife, had become more meaningful.

Education Plan

"I cannot compromise the education of my children; that's why I'm so relieved that I chose Prudentialife Education Plan because I know that this company will take care of my children in the future. Imagine all I have to do is fax the documents, assessment from the school, the certificate of full payment and in two days I can have the check encashed in the bank."

Ma. Agnes D. Reyes
Marketing Officer

Pension Plan

"Tiwala ako sa Prudentialife. Kung hindi dahil dito hindi natupad ang pangarap ko. Nabigyan ko yung anak ko ng regalo nung debut nya... and my husband was also happy dahil hindi ako humingi sa kanya ng pang-Hong Kong.

Maria Luisa F. David
Businesswoman

Life Plan

" Wala akong kaalam-alam nung namatay yung asawa ko. Tapos naalala ko yung Prudentialife Plan. Tinawagan lang namin sila, sila lahat ang nagasikaso at ang maganda pa dyan, binigyan pa kami ng pera...Malaking tulong yun sa aming mag-anak kahit papaano. Kaya nagpapasalamat ako sa Prudentialife."

Amalia C. Jocson
Housewife

Through the years, Prudentialife has diversified into financial services, memorialization, real estate, travel and leisure, and information technology. Prudentialife has become an icon of true and dedicated service, and stands as the no. 1 Filipino pre-need company in the country.

Amid the challenges the pre-need industry is facing, Prudentialife remains to be a pillar of strength and stability, with combined assets of over 30 billion pesos, more than 250 branch/area offices nationwide, 1,000 employees, and 30,000 sales people who imbibe the culture of excellence, innovation and kinship.

> "My warmest greetings to Prudentialife Plans, Inc. on the occasion of its 27th Foundation Day.

> The success of Prudentialife Plans, Inc. is largely a result of hard work and dedication of every employee in the company. An active involvement in the fulfillment of the obligations of a pre-need company, or of any company for that matter, is an essential factor to its remarkable achievements.
>
> May this celebration then serve as an inspiration to everyone to achieve and do more in securing a better future for the company and its clients.
>
> In this way, Prudentialife Plans, Inc. will not only maintain its good reputation in the pre-need industry but will also be able to nurture goodwill in the minds and hearts of the Filipino people.
>
> Congratulations and wishing you more fruitful years to come!"

Fe B. Barin
Chairperson
Securities and Exchange Commission

7 Gre
To
Pruc

1 Professional, values-driven and God-fearing management team, employees and sales force

2 Trust fund managed by highly stable trustee banks:

- Bank of the Philippine Islands
- Banco de Oro
- Metrobank
- Prudential Bank
- Equitable PCI Bank
- ING Bank
- Deutsche Bank

3 Trust fund with over P12 billion, growing at an average of 49% per annum

4 No

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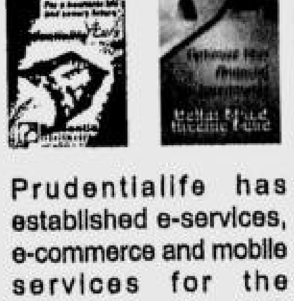
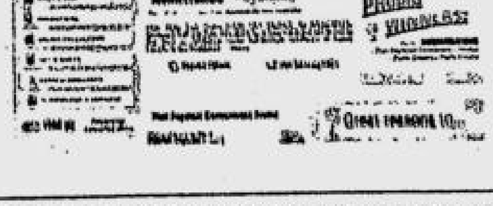
Passion to Serve

Prudentialife is one big happy family who genuinely cares for others. Imbued with a culture of excellence, kapamilya spirit and principles of work and prayer, Prudentialife continues to grow bigger and stronger, with the introduction of new products, information technology, and an integrated communications campaign.



To complement its pre-need plans, Prudentialife has introduced financial investment products such as Mutual Funds under the Optima brand, and has ventured into healthcare services through PrudentialifeCare.

Prudentialife has established e-services, e-commerce and mobile services for the convenience of both planholders and employees.



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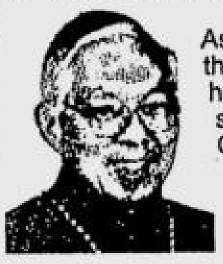

“With warm felicitations, I congratulate the Prudentailife Plans, Inc. on the occasion of their 27th Foundation Anniversary.

As you celebrate your anniversary, you will realize that there is so much to thank God for. This, I believe, is the spirit behind your tradition of extending help to a needy community and to the least of our brothers and sisters. To share your blessings is indeed the best way of expressing our gratitude to God who has been so good and gracious.

I commend you for your unrelenting efforts in raising the quality of life today and of the future. You are doing a great service to our Filipino people.

May the Lord bestow upon you more success and blessings.

Happy Anniversary and God bless you always.”

Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D.
Archbishop of Manila

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trust fund deficiency

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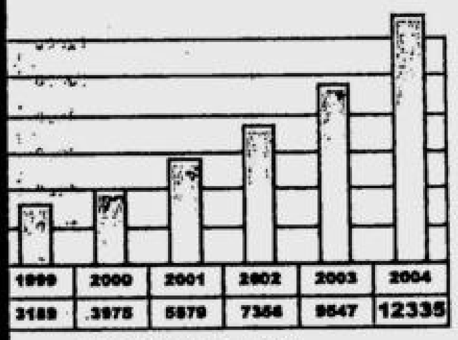

Trust Fund Build-Up

ighly liquid investments
hich are in safe
overnment securities
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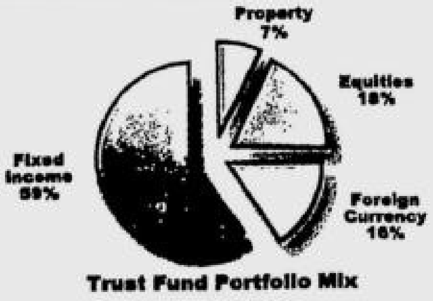
aturities

6 Financial statement audited by SGV and Co.

This assures the public of transparency in compliance with International Accounting Standards.

7 Trust fund in compliance with SEC requirements

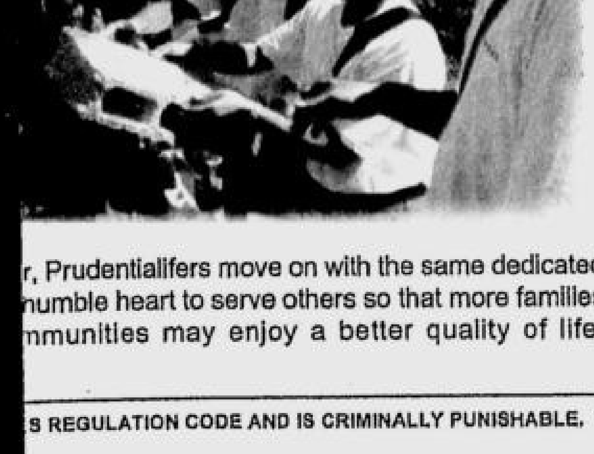
Balanced trust fund portfolio mix. Our investment in real estate is only 7% of the total fund while 18% is invested in equities, the bulk of which is in First Asia Realty, Inc., owners of SM Megamall, one of the largest malls in Asia. More than 60% of our total investments is in safe government securities.



Trust Fund Portfolio Mix

rporate Social
sponsibility

alife combines quality service with corporate social
bility. It is inspired with a selfless spirit to share
sings with others in need. The Gawad Kalinga
alife Village at Baseco, Tondo, Manila is uplifting
of 48 homeless families. It is one manifestation
entialife's service to the community and to God.



r, Prudentialifers move on with the same dedicated
humble heart to serve others so that more families
mmunities may enjoy a better quality of life.

Sharing Our Blessings

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Catch the Prudentialife Success Story on:
ANC May 8, 8PM
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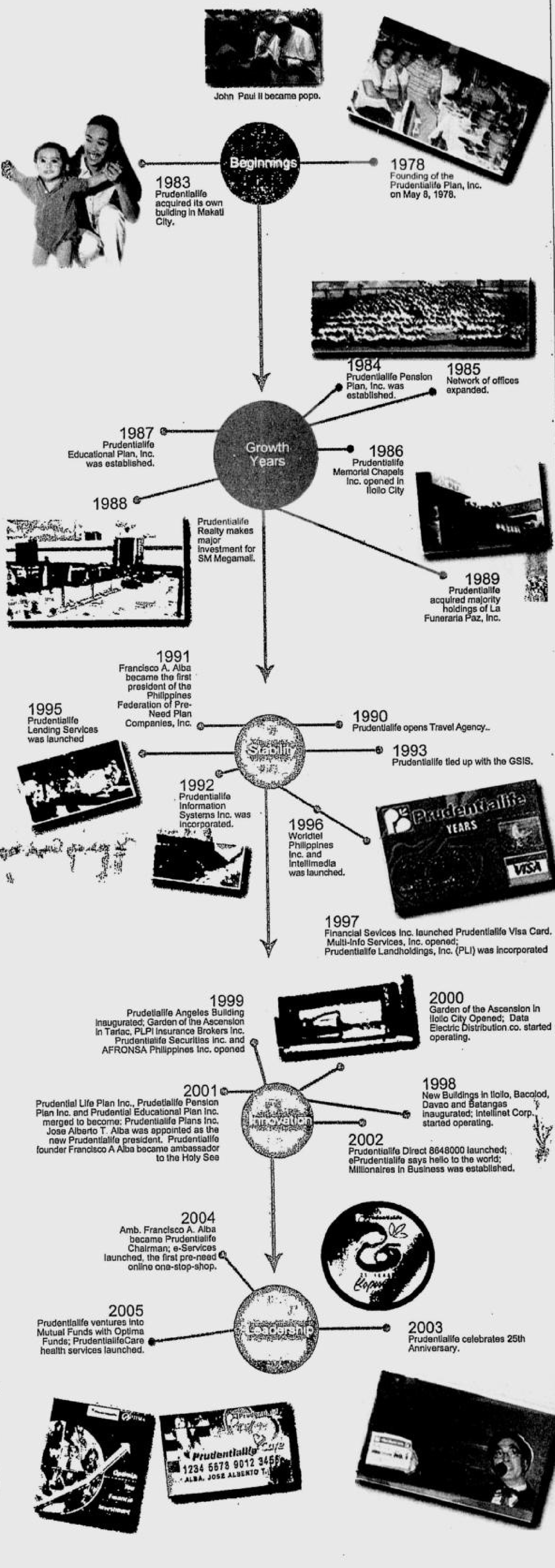
Prudentialife Milestones



John Paul II became pope.

1978
Founding of the Prudentialife Plan, Inc. on May 8, 1978.

1983
Prudentialife acquired its own building in Makati City.

1984
Prudentialife Pension Plan, Inc. was established.

1985
Network of offices expanded.

1986
Prudentialife Memorial Chapels Inc. opened in Iloilo City

1987
Prudentialife Educational Plan, Inc. was established.

1988
Prudentialife Realty makes major investment for SM Megamall.

1989
Prudentialife acquired majority holdings of La Funeraria Paz, Inc.

1990
Prudentialife opens Travel Agency..

1991
Francisco A. Alba became the first president of the Philippines Federation of Pre-Need Plan Companies, Inc.

1992
Prudentialife Information Systems Inc. was incorporated.

1993
Prudentialife tied up with the GSIS.

1995
Prudentialife Lending Services was launched

1996
Worldtel Philippines Inc. and Intellimedia was launched.

1997
Financial Sevices Inc. launched Prudentialife Visa Card. Multi-Info Services, Inc. opened; Prudentialife Landholdings, Inc. (PLI) was incorporated

1998
New Buildings in Iloilo, Bacolod, Davao and Batangas inaugurated; Intellinet Corp. started operating.

1999
Prudetialife Angeles Building inaugurated; Garden of the Ascension in Tarlac, PLPI Insurance Brokers Inc. Prudentialife Securities Inc. and AFRONSA Philippines Inc. opened

2000
Garden of the Ascension in Iloilo City Opened; Data Electric Distribution co. started operating.

2001
Prudential Life Plan Inc., Prudetialife Pension Plan Inc. and Prudential Educational Plan Inc. merged to become: Prudentialife Plans Inc. Jose Alberto T. Alba was appointed as the new Prudentialife president. Prudentialife founder Francisco A Alba became ambassador to the Holy See

2002
Prudentialife Direct 8648000 launched; ePrudentialife says hello to the world; Millionaires in Business was established.

2003
Prudentialife celebrates 25th Anniversary.

2004
Amb. Francisco A. Alba became Prudentialife Chairman; e-Services launched, the first pre-need online one-stop-shop.

2005
Prudentialife ventures into Mutual Funds with Optima Funds; PrudentialifeCare health services launched.

Prudentialife

Ang minamahal mo, ipagkatiwala mo sa Prudentialife.

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

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Ethically challenged

EDITORIAL

It seems to be our sad lot as a nation to be saddled with officials who are ethically challenged, if not outright corrupt. There's Winston Garcia, the president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, who cannot see anything wrong with getting P5.2 million in cash advances or signing a flawed billion-peso e-card contract with Union Bank, some of whose officers are said to be his relatives. There's Sergio Apostol who, as chairman and chief executive officer of the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp., merrily pocketed P9.2 million yearly in salaries and allowances. Earlier, top officials of the Social Security System were found to be receiving as much as P200,000 in salaries monthly even as the pension fund looked headed for bankruptcy.

Now comes Rolando Golez who seems to be having a jolly good time spending public funds as president and chief executive officer of the sequestered Coconut Industry Investment Fund. According to CIIF employees, one of the first things Golez did when he assumed the position about 16 months ago was to order the purchase of a Nissan Patrol worth P2.2 million. Since then, they said, he has been charging to the company P25,000 monthly in fuel expenses even though his house is within spitting distance from his office. He has also gone abroad eight times, usually in the company of his wife, spending P2 million on first-class tickets alone. One trip to the United States and Europe cost P6 million. And he has spent P960,000 for his golf fees plus food and drinks, so far.

Shortly before she resigned as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government two weeks ago, Haydee Yorac questioned such lavish and wasteful spending in companies established using coconut levy funds. She noted that in a span of two years, the CIIF spent more than P19.5 million on vehicle purchases alone. She questioned the unlimited representation expenses granted to company officials and branded as excessive the $300 per diem they got when traveling abroad. The CIIF companies are being held in trust by the government for the coconut farmers, Yorac pointed out, and those running them "should act like good stewards."

Golez has admitted all the allegations leveled at him anonymously by some CIIF employees, except for one thing: his wife's golf shoes were not paid for by the company but charged to his salary. The SUV, the golf expenses, the first-class tickets and generous allowances go with the job, he said. They conform with company "policy" and form part of the normal compensation package.

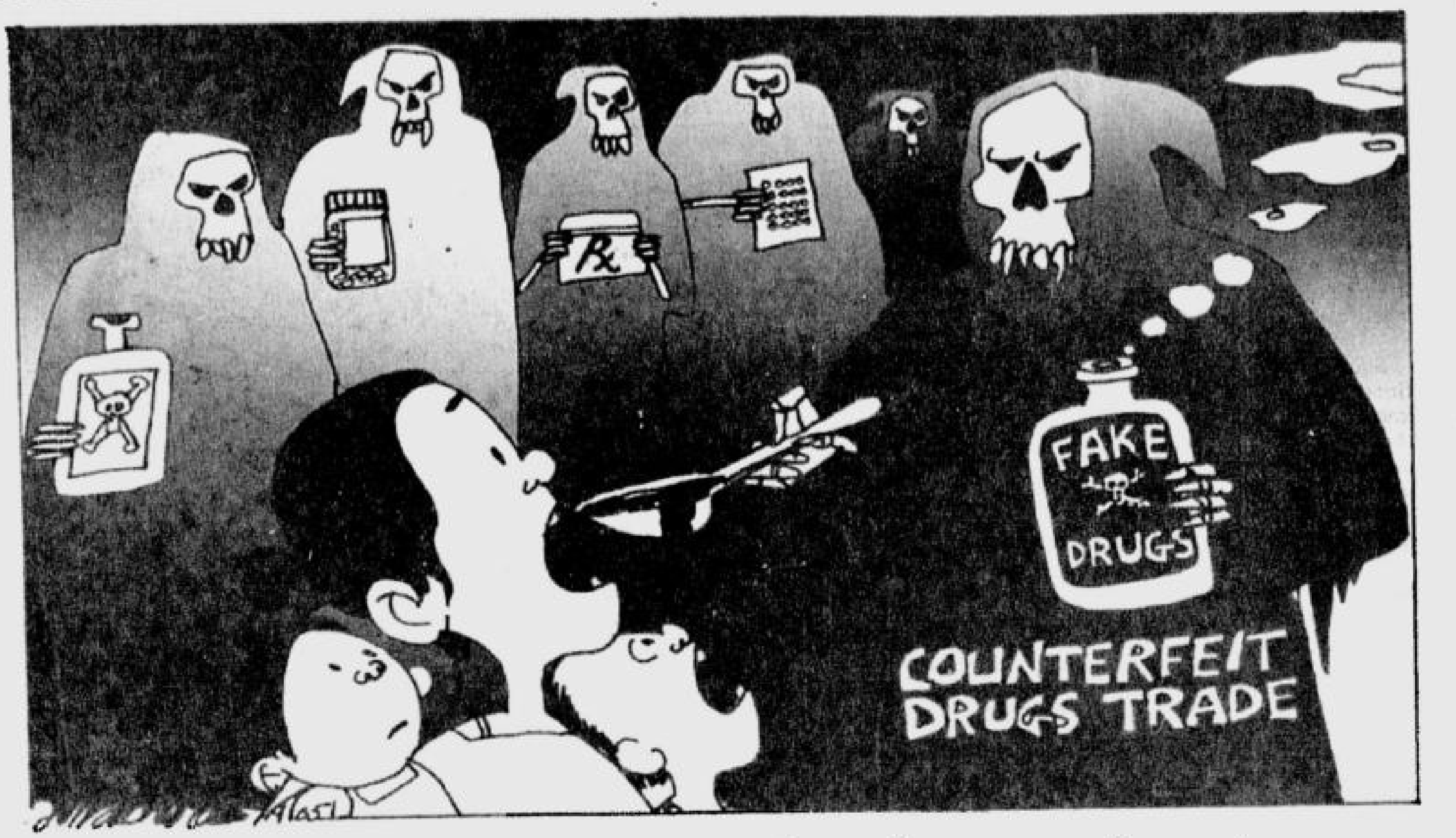
Whoever recruited Golez must have forgotten to tell him that he was not going to run just any company, but one that was built on the sweat of millions of coconut farmers. And since he landed the job, he must have been so engrossed with his golf to notice that these are not normal times. The government has been running huge budgetary deficits and its mountain of debt is threatening to sink the economy. The company he is running is hardly a picture of financial health: it already lost P70 million during the first two months. If to him all these do not call for some cost-cutting, what kind of CEO is he?

Faced with the latest scandal in her administration, President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered a stop to "perks or lavishness involving the use of public funds." She warned that administrative charges would be filed against those found violating the austerity measures spelled out in Administrative Order 103 which she signed last year.

Among other things, AO 103 suspends purchases of new vehicles and official travels and prohibits excessive fuel allowances and representation expenses, precisely the things that Golez is accused of committing. So will he be the first to get the axe?

Apparently not if Ms Arroyo can help it. In fact, she has shown Golez a way out of the fix by saying her AO was not to be strictly applied to "professional line managers" but only to members of the boards of government corporations. She said she was careful about cutting the compensation of professional managers, lest they go back to the private sector.

Golez certainly can count himself among this lucky group. So what was the President's warning all about? If she cannot understand why many Filipinos regard as extravagant such perks as Golez claims to be his due, she should just say so. And if she cannot ask her own appointees to make some sacrifices in these difficult times, how can she ask the people, who are already weighed down by the high cost of living, to sacrifice some more by paying more taxes?



Coco levy money attracting fortune hunters

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government is supposed to take back for the government wealth illegally gotten during the regime of Ferdinand Marcos by his family and cronies. To prevent the dissipation of the assets of sequestered companies, the PCGG assigned "fiscal agents" to each company to watch over and preserve company assets.

In the early days, these agents really watched over the companies assigned to them with eagle eyes. But as time passed, and the process of recovery took longer and longer—mainly due to our very slow justice system—the "fiscal agents," or the PCGG nominees to the boards of sequestered corporations, became more "*bantay salakay*" than watchdogs. They were the first to loot them. As a result, corporations that were originally profitable went bankrupt.

It became a classic case of "one for all and all for one." Members of the boards voted themselves fabulous compensations and luxurious perks—brand-new luxury vehicles, generous travel, representation and discretionary allowances, bonuses, etc. for themselves and even for their wives. A half-million-peso monthly salary for the heads of these companies—and most of the government-owned and controlled corporations—is the going rate. And, almost without exception, these are all money-losing corporations—losing precisely because PCGG nominees are looting them.

In private companies, bonuses are given to officers only when the corporations are very profitable. When the corporations are losing, the officials take voluntary pay cuts to save on costs.

Not in our sequestered companies. The more a company is losing, the more the PCGG nominees scramble to get as much and as fast as they can—before the money runs out.

The PCGG watchdogs before are mostly fortune hunters and predators now. Directorships in sequestered companies—and in the boards of government-owned and -controlled corporations—are doled out as "bribes" to camp followers, losing candidates, party favorites, etc.

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

The more money a corporation has, the more aspirants there are to its board—like vultures, hyenas and jackals circling a carcass.

The coconut levy fund is a prime example. With P104 billion (that's billion) in the fund, it is attracting all the greedy human scavengers in the land. The fund belongs to coconut farmers, but it is a fortune so big that, to fortune hunters, it is like King Solomon's Mines and the Yamashita Treasure combined.

The fund is so irresistible that smart operators are coming out of the woodwork with imaginative ideas on how to get their hands on some of that fortune—before somebody else beats them to it. Spending P80.4 billion (that's billion again) of the coconut levy fund for a coconut nursery in Agusan del Sur is one such idea.

Ms Evangeline Valbuena, the erstwhile head of the Philippine Coconut Authority—which is supposed to be the lead agency in anything that has to do with the coconut—has already pointed out the folly of the Agusan del Sur nursery: The soil is not suitable for coconut, it is too far from coconut regions so that transporting the seedlings would be too expensive. Why pour all P80.4 billion in one place when the amount can be distributed to several places so that more people and places can benefit from it?

Valbuena's reasons all make sense, but instead of following her suggestions, her superiors forced her out of the PCA—after only four months in office—so that a more cooperative administrator can replace her.

The agency pushing the nursery idea is the Coconut Industry Investment Fund headed by one Rolando Golez. The CIIF is supposed to invest in coconut projects. If the nursery project is such a good idea, why doesn't the CIIF invest in it instead of using coconut levy money (which belongs to farmers) for it?

Golez was cast into the limelight recently when resigned PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac revealed that he is spending coco levy money like there is no tomorrow.

Aside from a half-million basic salary, Yorac said Golez was given a new luxury SUV, traveled several times abroad with his wife using company funds, and spent coco levy funds for shares and membership in golf clubs. Golez unashamedly admitted receiving these perks, justifying them as "part of his compensation package." CIIF has lost P70 million as of February 2005. Golez should have volunteered to take pay cuts instead of getting such lavish perks. Better yet, President Macapagal-Arroyo should fire him for being so callous.

How can the President ask the people to pay more taxes when her officials are spending money like maharajahs—money belonging to dirt-poor coconut farmers who will be among the hardest hit by her new taxes?

One of the promises of GMA was to curb graft and corruption. But instead of getting rid of corrupt officials, it is the honest officials who are leaving. First, it was Valbuena, then Yorac, then another PCGG official, then Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus. They all can no longer stomach the corruption in the GMA administration.

GMA's reaction to the loss of honest people is the usual: press releases. Orders for explanations and investigations. But this takes the cake: the investigating committee is composed of the board members of the United Coconut Planters Bank, which is part of the cabal composed of oil mills, bank and other agencies all using coconut levy funds.

Even before the investigation could begin, the committee is already hinting at a whitewash. It said the excessive pay and perks may have been due to company policies. Of course, the investigators will not find any wrongdoing. They are receiving similar generous pay and allowances.

About time

I'M glad my favorite newspaper took the dramatic tack it did last Wednesday, publishing that editorial on the current mayhem being wreaked on Filipino journalists in red ink. About time someone did it, if only to rouse this country violently from its stupor in the face of a breathtaking oppression. Ignacio Bunye says the US Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) exaggerates when it says the Philippines has become the most dangerous country for journalists. Well, I can only sympathize with him for having the most thankless job in the world. A lightning rod has a happier lot.

The CPJ isn't the first to say so. Only a couple of weeks ago, the Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) said: "A culture of impunity reigns, for which the highest government authorities are responsible, that has allowed killers and those who send them to murder so many journalists in every corner of the country."

What is so exaggerated about both groups' shrill warnings and shriller condemnations? The sheer quantity of the corpses alone speaks for itself. A mind-boggling 35 Filipino journalists have been killed while doing their work since 2000, which is more than a fourth of the 66 killed since democracy was restored in 1986. That period falls largely under GMA's watch. Surely that justifies the contention that, under GMA, journalists have become more endangered than taxpayers' money?

But more than this, the quality of the murders indicts government to hell. The local journalists did not die from crossfire or while carrying out dangerous assignments, they were hunted down and shot like dogs for raising their voices against hoodlums and thugs in official garbs. The victims had been reporting on government corruption, drug dealing and organized crime. Both the CPJ and RSF suggest the murderers are never caught because they enjoy the authorities' protection. The truth is probably worse: They are never caught because they are the authorities themselves, or are obeying their orders. Surely too, it's safe to say that in this country being a journalist is a

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

dangerous assignment?

I have only a couple of things to add to the thunderous indictments of the RSF, CPJ and the INQUIRER.

The first, that the "culture of impunity" extends to more than journalists, it extends to other professions in this country, which, too, are becoming endangered. The lesser of them are politicians, who have been assassinated plentifully of late. Of course, that is nothing new in this country; neither does the recent rash of killings surpass the mayhem of the past, particularly the era before martial law. And many Filipinos who have no love lost for politicians will not find it an unmitigated curse.

More important are the human rights activists who are now truly being murdered with impunity. They have been abducted or shot to death over the last few months, their fate soliciting only passing notice from media and the public. Many of them have been involved in some way with the continuing dispute at Hacienda Luisita. One may say exactly the same thing: The reason the murderers aren't being caught is that they enjoy the protection of the authorities. Worse, they are the authorities themselves.

Taken collectively, this is a scale of mayhem that makes a mockery not just of freedom of the press but of freedom itself. There is no freedom that carries with it the death penalty. The threat of murder from private individuals is not more preferable to the threat of jail from a dictator. We have to wonder if we live in a democracy at all.

My second point, which is not mentioned in the protests, but which I have harped on repeatedly in the past, is that the problem is not just the murder of journalists, it is the murder of local (as against national) journalists. None of the dead has been a journalist working in Metro Manila. All of the dead have been journalists working outside of it. I cannot sufficiently belabor the importance of that point.

That is what continues to give the country a patina of press freedom. We tend to see life through the prism of the national media, not the local one. So long as journalists in Metro Manila are able to express fearless views, with as much impunity as killers of journalists are able to ply their vicious trade outside of it, we will continue to believe there is no threat to press freedom. The TV networks and radio stations and newspapers and the media organizations in Metro Manila have expressed routine condemnations of the killings, but few have taken it to heart. My profound admiration goes to those that have.

I've always said we ought to make a passionate stand here for many reasons. Not the least of them is self-preservation. Bertolt Brecht's famous aphorism comes to mind, the one about keeping silent while the thugs drag away your neighbor because he is a Jew and a communist anyway. You take that attitude, you will find yourself being dragged away one day. We do not oppose the mayhem violently, it will find us one day. All it takes is a first time.

But the far more important reason is justice: The killing of an innocent person is bad enough, the killing of someone who is doing the world a monumental service rocks the very foundations of heaven. Forget the provincial cops and soldiers who gun one another down over drugs and *jueteng*, mind only provincial reporters and announcers who report them and fulminate against them and are gunned down often right on their doorsteps. That may not happen in any society that deems itself civilized. That may not be possible in any society that imagines itself democratic. That may not be allowed by any tribe that considers itself part of the human race.

I'm glad the INQUIRER has seen red on this one. About time we fought back.

Out of Africa

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CAPETOWN, South Africa—This country at the southernmost part of the African continent—also referred to as the "Dark Continent"—has been in the news lately. South Africa co-hosted, with Indonesia, the recent Afro-Asian Summit, which was recently held in Jakarta to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the original Afro-Asian Summit that was held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 with the late President Sukarno as host. President Macapagal-Arroyo attended the summit, together with other leaders of the two continents.

South Africa was also recently on the cover of Time magazine which reviewed the ten years following the end of apartheid in that country and its efforts at trying to integrate the black majority and the very small white minority. It made news lately when it won the bid to host the World Cup in 2010.

* * *

South Africa, however, compared to the continent of Africa, still remains relatively unknown to most people in other countries. Mention Africa and one immediately thinks of the animals that roam its vast terrain—lions, elephants, rhinoceros, hippopotamuses, buffaloes and giraffes; and of the exciting safaris, just like the ones seen in the movies.

Some of you would remember how Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps of tanks ruled the battlefields of North Africa in the early years of World War II, until he was stopped by Field Marshal Montgomery. Ernest Hemingway put Africa on the consciousness of at least two generations of literature students with his novel, "Snows of Kilimanjaro."

During the recent search for a new Pope to succeed Pope John Paul II, the name of Francis Cardinal Arinze of Nigeria was often mentioned as a possible dark horse—a tribute partly to the fact that the African Church has grown phenomenally in the past 15 years.

* * *

There were also the great movies about Africa. "Snows of Kilimanjaro" was made into a movie long ago, starring Gregory Peck and Susan Hayward; and the immortal "Casablanca" which was set in Morocco. Of the contemporary films, one movie that popularized the continent was "Out of Africa," where Meryl Streep played a Danish writer who fell in love with a dashing businessman, played by Robert Redford. There's also that dramatic movie, "The Ghost in the Darkness," which was about the competition between the British and the Germans to develop East Africa. In the race as to who would be able to build more bridges, the British were stymied by the repeated attacks on their black workers by a pack of fierce lions. The British engineer-officer, played by actor Val Kilmer, and the American soldier of fortune, portrayed by Michael Douglas, fought them off at the cost of the latter's life.

* * *

But South Africa, the country at the tip of the African continent, is not much known. Unfortunately, what put it on the map was the much-hated policy of apartheid of the Dutch colonial government in the '60s, which segregated the blacks from the whites and restricted the former in ghettoes, called "townships." Interaction between the two races was punished severely. I recall how so many countries of the United Nations condemned the apartheid policy. One of them was the Philippines which, for a long while, didn't have diplomatic relations with South Africa; Filipinos were expressly forbidden to travel to South Africa. I remember the popular joke then: "What's the opposite of apartheid? 'Kapatid.'"

* * *

But it was also apartheid that propelled to world consciousness the tall black South African leader Nelson Mandela, who was imprisoned for 27 years, 18 of them in Robben Island across the bay of Capetown, in the course of his long fight for freedom for his native country and people. The world cheered when he was released in 1991 and followed his campaign to become the first democratically elected president of the South African Republic in 1993. In 1995, Mandela put an end to apartheid. Mandela's personal and political quarrels with his first wife, Winnie Mandela and his subsequent marriage to his second wife, Gracca Machel, were grist for the world press.

* * *

I recall how excited the world was over the world's first heart transplant surgery performed in the '60s by Dr. Christian Barnard, a dashing white South African, in a hospital here in Cape Town. South Africa is also known for its gems marketed by the huge De Beers firm. It has also produced some writers of international fame, notably Alan Paton ("Cry the Beloved Country") and J. R. R. Tolkien of the "Lord of the Rings" fame. Last year, South African actress Charlize Theron, who descended from the French Huguenots and grew up in Johannesburg, won the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role in "Monster." It boasts of a number of world-class golfers, among them Gary Player, Ernie Els and Retief Goozen. Its wines are rated among the world's best.

* * *

Geography students of our generation are familiar with the Cape of Good Hope, the very tip of the African continent. We learned that, for centuries, ships from Europe (including those of the Spanish *conquistadores* who colonized the Philippines and of the European explorers looking for the fabled spices of the East), had to make the long turn, around the Cape, in order to get to the East. That roundabout journey was cut short by the opening of the Suez Canal in Egypt in 1869.

* * *

My husband and I and our youngest son Conrad were enticed by our son Buddy to take our vacation in this country, as he stressed how beautiful and exciting it is. It is far though: it took us over 11 hours to travel straight from Singapore to Capetown. But I must say that the long trip is well-worth it, for SA has so much beauty in flora and fauna and in lore and legend—albeit oftentimes of a wild untamed kind.

(*To be continued*)

Mined future

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

THE CONSTITUTION does not allow selling out of our natural resources to the highest bidder," commented Jean Marie Ferraris, team leader of the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center in Davao City. She was reacting to the Supreme Court's final decision effectively allowing foreigners to get into the exploration, development and utilization of the country's mineral resources.

Her comment may have sounded plain, wishful thoughts, yet, it summed up the sentiments of anti-mining advocates and environmentalist groups, especially in Mindanao.

Prospecting for mineral deposits is now in high gear following the government's declaration last February that the country's mineral resources are "open for business"—barely a day after the high court rendered the decision. Expectedly, government bureaucrats and mining advocates immediately made some bullish projections—a revitalized mining industry; P100 billion pesos in annual income that could be used to pay our gargantuan foreign debt and erase the budget deficit; no less than 1.2 million job opportunities to be created, particularly in the far-flung upland areas, by the mining operations.

As in the past, these pro-mining projections are largely based on the exploitation of Mindanao's mineral resources which account for 80 percent of the country's total copper, nickel and gold deposits.

In fact, 11 of the government's 23 flagship mining projects are found in Mindanao, this according to Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines.

The island is the site of at least half of the 37 mining exploration projects in the country today. Just last week, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources identified nine towns in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, North Cotabato and Sarangani in Southwestern Mindanao (Region XII) as "business" sites for medium- and large-scale gold and copper mining.

"Indeed, mining is the latest magic charm being used by the state and foreign companies to bring in development and progress in Mindanao," noted Davao City-based journalist Penelope Sanz, who is doing a doctoral anthropology thesis on the Lumad's ancestral domain and on how mining affects them.

"However, despite its charms, members of indigenous communities and several sectors of the society remain skeptical and steadfast in their militancy against minerals and mines development. After all, the mining industry has been accused of degrading the environment, of displacing communities, of disregarding indigenous cultures, of breaking promises, and of non-compliance with local regulations.

They are seldom transparent, seldom honest, and forthright when it comes to accepting responsibility for environmental degradation. They have frequently failed to admit what everyone else could see."

Sanz said the current thrust to mine Mindanao should be analyzed in the context of historicity in the island's development. "Is there a connection between mining and massive deforestation in the 1960s to 1980s?" she asked, adding that presenting logging in the guise of development was a strategy to pave the way for mining. "It should be noted that logging brought prosperity to the moneyed few, but never progress for the majority. Is Mindanao's poverty induced then?"

Indeed, until the early '80s, the Philippines ranked among the top five gold-producing countries of the world and among the top ten that were producing copper, chromite and nickel.

Former President Ramos, in whose term the Mining Act of 1995 was passed, claimed that the mining industry even accounted for 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product and 25 percent of the country's export trade. If it were so, one wonders why massive poverty and underdevelopment remain prevalent in the areas "benefited" by mining during his time.

In the face of massive poverty, it only spawned kleptocratic leaders. The enormity of the environmental damage wrought by the mining industry in the past, like the tragedy in Marinduque, cannot be simply ignored.

"Mining cannot alleviate poverty. It actually causes poverty of local communities," argued Emelina G. Regis, director of the Institute for Environmental Conservation and Research of the Ateneo de Naga University. The government's decision to promote mining "can be disastrous to our environment" and its effect will be long-term, Regis noted in a study submitted early this year to Environment Secretary Michael Defensor.

Among others, Regis cited the following possible effects of mineral exploitation: forest cover destruction, depletion of freshwater sources, the spread of toxic chemicals in the ecosystem thus reducing plant productivity and threatening all living organisms, including humans, with illnesses, even death.

Regis further argued that "mining only creates a boom economy that gives a distorted impression that mining brings progress and development in nearby villages." This is so because menial jobs become available to local residents who lack the skills for the technology-dependent mining operations or for heavy-equipment handling.

Her study somehow validated the warning issued last week by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, which include representatives from UN agencies and other international scientific development organizations: "Human activity is putting such strain on the natural functions of Earth that the ability of the planet's ecosystem to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted."

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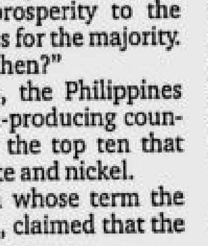
Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

A good shave

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



THE TRADITIONAL accoutrements of the dapper male in other climes have generally met their Waterloo in our tropical climate, banished by the increasing heat, and the total victory of the Ye-ye look of the late '50s and early '60s, when the Miami-cum-Havana look popularized by Manila mayors Arsenio Lacson and Antonio Villegas became the definition of masculine dressing: gaudy short-sleeved shirt, dangling medallions, trousers of a fitted cut and from chemically produced cloths, shoes of a chukka-boot or cowboy boot construction, clutch bag optional; formal wear composed of ill-fitting jacket with a (possibly long-sleeved) shirt open at the throat with exaggerated collars. This mode of dressing hearkened back to an earlier era—Liberation—but adopted and made de rigueur by Arsenic and Yeba, themselves members of the Liberation generation. This mode of dressing thrives to the present, its premier exponent being Manila Mayor Lito Atienza (whose father, Hermie, ironically, was famous in the '50s for his stubborn loyalty to prewar white linen suits, so frayed people joked that the Liberals had to win in 1961 so Hermie Atienza could afford a new wardrobe); while the Chicano-transplanted to-Tondo gangster look (with Presley pompadour) was the hallmark of Joseph Estrada.

The Dark Age that was the Seventies—not to mention the decadent 1960s—finally killed off the more dapper way of dressing that the movie idols of an earlier generation (Rogelio de la Rosa foremost among them) struggled to keep alive. The shark-skin suit in tropical white, two-tone shoes and the brillantine hair (a sartorial link with "Peacetime") were banished forever as the cinematic idols of that era gave way to the long-sideburned, long-haired, synthetic material-clad gang of movie idols "Who Dared Not Wear Suits" at all.

Even the *baro* (as Nick Joaquin sensibly referred to the barong Tagalog, to strip it of its tribal associations) was not spared. Between its regular mutations—as people took their cue from what the dictator had taken a fancy to in Malacañang—and the seemingly total victory of synthetic fabrics, the *baro* had no chance of avoiding the bastardized fate that befell formal clothing throughout the word. This was the era of the baby-blue tuxedo complete with ruffled shirt, after all.

And so, all the great "accessories" fell by the wayside. Cufflinks. Shirt studs (no point wearing them as they would have been lost amongst the ruffles). Suspenders. Brogues, oxfords, loafers, any type of lace-ups. Watches of traditional design. The bespoke suit. The low-key tuxedo. The necktie and the bow-tie.

And with them went the great rituals. The *Rigodon*, the Formal Occasion, and most of all, The Shave, which nearly died out when Baby Boomers suddenly developed a mass allergy to The.Haircut. The Shave, that pleasure one generation—then two, and counting—had lived without, from the day people got it into their heads that the scruffy look was in.

Of course, people still shave, and while some purists still talk fondly of their straight razors, most are happy that the safety razor was invented. Indeed, we have done better; we are no longer content with the "*ahit* Rubie"; we like Gillette. I myself am a fan of the best, and latest of its products, the Mach 3. But there are times when I still crave a real shave.

This used to be about being shaved by a barber. A rare—and, indeed, dangerous—luxury. My father, with his mania about germs, always thought my visits to the barber (for the purpose of being shaved) were exercises in suicidal lunacy: "Always ask for a fresh blade," he would plead, which always made me reply that I would (but to be shaved by a barber wielding a safety razor is, to me, a waste of money; it is a straight razor or nothing).

You cannot get a good, traditional shave at a salon. They may be able to give you that look that sets you apart as one of the stylish, but their way of shaving is simply pedestrian: disposable razor, cream from a can, fumbling manipulation of the face and the diffident—timid—elimination of whiskers. It is increasingly impossible to do so even at an old-fashioned barbershop.

I used to go to a Mang Mario, who was the best kind of barber of all: old, bald, with that gigolo look (enormous collars, bell-bottom pants, white shoes) that today's trend-setters so desperately try to achieve, but which he had obviously been "into" even before I was born. Mang Mario would open his drawer and take out his straight razor with its ivory handle, and give it a good stropping on a piece of leather. Satisfied with the keenness of his instrument, he then would tinker with several mysterious bottles, choose one, squirt something on his hands, rubs them vigorously, and then apply some sort of unguent to your face. Then he would return armed with a couple of steaming Good Morning towels. One applied to the upper part of your face; the other, to the lower part; your nostrils were all that were left exposed. He would abandon you for five minutes; return, the towels discarded, and then the shaving cream slathered on.

Other barbers would then begin applying the straight razor to your face, but Mang Mario believed in the twice-baked technique. After slathering on the shaving cream, he would apply more steaming Good Morning towels; and only then did he begin the process of scraping off every offensive hair.

But I don't get to visit him anymore; in his stead is a new joy. Old fashioned shaving soap, and a shaving brush. Even if I use a safety razor, it's a wonderful way to start the day. Rituals matter, if only to pamper yourself before you begin the day.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Reexamining the bar exams

COMMENTARY

Ismael G. Khan Jr.

THE BAR examinations have once again been thrust into center stage after this annual rite of passage for would-be lawyers was caught in the crosshairs of Sen. Miriam Santiago. According to the good senator, "the bar exams is not the best gauge of one's attitude to practice law because it fails to test the skills needed in the legal profession."

The senator's concern is understandable. However, as retired Supreme Court Justice Isagani Cruz pointed out, abolishing the bar exams may not be the best answer. Similar proposals have been made at one time or another in the 104 years. It is interesting to recall that, some thirty years ago, no less than the late Chief Justice Fred Ruiz Castro questioned the reliability of the bar examinations and argued for a different scheme of accrediting law graduates for admission to the bar. However, there was a big hue and cry against abolishing the bar examinations, and the proposal was quietly shelved.

Of course, the fact that a law graduate has passed the bar exams is not a guarantee that he will turn out to be an asset to the profession. In 2004 alone, as pointed out by Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago who is on a crusade for "a more ethical bar," the Supreme Court meted out disciplinary penalties on 112 lawyers, including the disbarment of 10 "*compañeros*" and the suspension of 43 others.

Anyway, administrative and structural changes are now, in fact, being introduced to reform the bar examinations which have essentially remained untouched since the first bar examinations were held in 1901, which only four out of thirteen candidates successfully hurdled. As the initial salvo in a package of innovations under the Supreme Court's Action Program for Judicial Reform, the first major change (Bar Matter No. 1161) was put into effect in the last bar examinations. Thus, a person aspiring to be a lawyer will henceforth be limited to only five chances to prove that he possesses the required "verbal, writing, analytical proficiency and reading comprehension skills," to make it in the legal profession. As Senator Santiago correctly pointed out, there are hundreds of law graduates who have been taking the bar examinations repeatedly with very little prospect of passing them.

Deputy Clerk of Court Cristina Layusa, the Court's bar confidant, claims that she will somehow sadly miss that fellow "in his seventies" who flunked the bar exams for the 25th time last year. This suggests that a mandatory law school admission test for nationwide implementation, as Senator Santiago recommended, may be very useful in evaluating a student's mental and emotional aptitude for the rigid discipline of the law. Again, this development is in the offing, and may come sooner rather than later.

Among the many other reform areas that will have to be assessed: inclusion of a subject on clinical legal education in the law curriculum, leading to an apprenticeship program in the judiciary, prosecution service, and law offices; and the accreditation and supervision of more than a hundred law schools which have proliferated all over the country. A study of the Commission on Higher Education made a disturbing finding—a big number of these so-called schools and colleges of law have scored a big fat zero in the bar examinations for several consecutive years running.

As early as five years ago, the Supreme Court formed a special study group composed of retired magistrates, chaired by PHILJA Chancellor Ameurfina Melencio Herrera, to "conduct studies on steps to further safeguard the integrity of the bar examinations and to make them effective tools in measuring the adequacy of the law curriculum and the quality of the instruction given by law schools." Their copious notes and memoranda were further vetted by the Supreme Court's Committee on Legal Education and Bar Matters, chaired by now retired Justice Jose Vitug.

By fortunate happenstance, Justice Vicente Mendoza, one of the committee's members, also retired, had just completed a comprehensive paper titled "Toward Meaningful Reforms in the Bar Examinations," proposing drastic changes in the design and construction of questions, as well as in the marking and grading of the essay questions in the bar examinations. This academic tack, which he anchored on the practical and empirical findings of diverse bar reform groups from overseas, became the linchpin of focus group discussions and consultations conducted around the country, with members of the IBP, law school deans and professors, alternative law groups, the CHED, the UP Law Center, various legal and bar associations, as well as foreign experts in bar examinations participating. Their overwhelming conclusion: the bar examinations should not be abolished; but there is dire need for changes.

Consequently, you may expect the following structural changes in the way the bar examinations will be framed and formatted in a year or two: (a) adoption of objective multiple-choice questions for 30 percent to 40 percent of the total number of questions; (b) formulation of essay test questions and "model answers" as part of the calibration of test papers; (c) appointment of a tenured board of examiners; (d) appointment of readership panels for each subject to address the issue of bias or subjectivity, while at the same time facilitating the correction of examination booklets; and (e) adoption of the calibration method in the correction of essay-type questions to correct variations in the level of test standards. Other innovations will be left to the Legal Education Board, a new entity to be organized under the aegis of the Supreme Court, to prescribe the requisite rules concerning admission to the practice of law.

A cautionary note: it may also be a tad unseemly to demean the achievement of bar topnotchers as something of a fluke or "*tsamba*." After all, only ten of them make it to the so-called magic circle each year, and bar placers who have failed to make it in the legal profession constitute a rare exception. It's difficult to knock it considering that five presidents of the Philippines are bar topnotchers, namely, Manuel Roxas, Jose Laurel, Carlos Garcia, Diosdado Macapagal, and Ferdinand Marcos, not to mention that the first four women to sit on the Supreme Court also came from the ranks of the top ten—three of them as *numero uno*,namely, Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, Ameurfina Melencio Herrera, Irene R. Cortes, and Carolina Griño-Aquino, the widow of Chief Justice Ramon Aquino, who was himself a bar topnotcher. Many others populate the top echelons in private practice, in corporations, the academe, as well as the executive and legislative departments, including Senate President Franklin Drilon, one of the four in Senator Santiago's UP class to land in the top ten.

Ismael G. Khan Jr. is the assistant court administrator and chief of the Supreme Court's Public Information Office.

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For God and justice, put an end to culture of violence

WE would like to express our pained concern over the continuing violent repression of the people and of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, also known as the Aglipayan Church.

Our hearts bled with indescribable anguish for Fr. William Tadena, a gentle and soft spoken priest, who was fatally shot pointblank several times in the head on March 13, 2005, reportedly by minions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. His sacristan, who was with him at that time, was also wounded in the attack and barely escaped death.

Three weeks earlier, Fr. Allan Caparro and his wife Aileen were ambushed by suspected military men. Until now, they remain shaken by the incident.

Our national office is currently swamped with chilling reports from our various dioceses and parishes about some of our bishops and priests receiving death threats, or being placed under surveillance by military intelligence agents, or listed in the AFP's order of battle. The Aglipayan Church itself is among the organizations listed by the AFP as "enemies of the state."

Is this because the Aglipayan Church has been denouncing government's immoral laws, programs and practices; and because our bishops, priests and lay members are actively joining morally legitimate rallies, strikes condemning the country's militarization and the killing of mass leaders? Is this our punishment for our faithful devotion to Jesus Christ and His teachings, for engaging in active spirituality?

The President and the AFP should know that this is what we believe in and this is our existence. We implore them to kindly respect our belief and principles. The meaningful solidarity of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and its bishops and priests with the struggling poor of our country today is, for us, like burning incense that we offer in the altar of God. We beg both the President and the AFP leadership to respect us and to protect our rights.

Branding peaceful political dissenters as enemies of the state and answering their cries for justice with bullets could be like putting lighted candles on burning incense. It will not pacify, but intensify instead, public outrage.

For the peace of God and justice to prevail, the President and the AFP must put an end to this culture of violence.

—RIGHT REV. GODOFREDO J. DAVID,
general secretary,
MOST REV. TOMAS A. MILLAMENA, D.D.
Obispo Maximo,
Iglesia Filipina Independiente

Nothing to do with Ho's return

THIS refers to the news story, "Stanley Ho's return said to have Chinoy's backing." (PDI, 3/29/05) The report stated: "Ho has the backing of an influential Chinese-Filipino businessman and former ambassador." Although it did not categorically name me as the one who facilitated and lobbied for the opening of the floating casino, it was clearly and obviously referring to me.

I am now taking the liberty to vehemently deny the accusations leveled against me by Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos and by the INQUIRER. I have nothing to do with the reported re-opening of the floating casino brought here by Ho. Neither do I know him personally.

With due respect, I think the report was written in bad faith, designed to discredit my person and my family's name which I have protected over the years. I hope this letter will correct the wrong that has been done by the news report on my reputation.

—ANTONIO CABANGON-CHUA,
former ambassador to Laos,
Makati City

I'M quite surprised that the good ambassador would react to this story—which did not even mention him—and then claim that it was "written in bad faith" and meant to discredit his reputation.

For the record, Rep. Imee Marcos did not identify the ambassador who was allegedly lobbying for the Jumbo restaurant when she issued her statement on March 28.

—PHILIP C. TUBEZA,
PDI reporter

Mixing pork with political will

MORE than two decades ago, a jeepney could travel from Bocaue to Monumento via MacArthur Highway with relative ease. It would only take, more or less, an hour. And floods occurred only at very low-lying places. However, problems (such as traffic jams and floodings) started to emerge with the increase in the number of vehicles plying the road and squatters who have settled on the roadsides. The establishment of SM in Marilao made the traffic problems worse.

Flyovers would help a lot if they would be built in major intersections in Valenzuela, Meycauayan, Marilao and Bocaue. As to the floods, relocating the squatters and dredging the rivers would also be of great help.

While it's summertime, let's hope that the congressmen in the affected districts would exercise political will to do what they ought to do. Anyway, how much is the cost of a few flyovers compared to their combined "pork"? As the saying goes, "If there's a will, there's a way!"

—JUN GUMATAY,
junche516@hotmail.com

A Filipina Nobel Prize winner?

I REFUSE to believe that women are biologically inferior to men insofar as brain power is concerned. Time and time again, women have done better than men, and not only at the University of the Philippines where, as Michael Tan says, seven of its latest harvest of 10 "summas" happen to be women.

I would like to pose this intriguing question, however: Why have men far outnumbered women among Nobel Prize awardees all these years in the disciplines of physics, medicine, mathematics, chemistry and literature? Somebody who has the answer to this question could very well get a Nobel Prize.

Yes, I would very much like a Filipina to emerge as another Einstein. Let her come up with a Unified Theory of the Cosmos—an achievement which eluded Einstein all those years at Princeton University—and I am confident she will get a Nobel Prize, the first ever to be awarded to a Filipino.

—MARIANO PATALINJUG,
11 Balint Drive,
Apt 241, Yonkers, NY 10710

Hooked from the start

I AM a Filipina living in England, and I must say that I read the INQUIRER via the Internet. And I just love it! It was recommended by a friend who lives in Alaska, and I got hooked on it from the very start. I am putting in a good word for the INQUIRER because it has such good articles and writers. I enjoy them all—from the front-page stories to sports.

Let me add one place in London that is worth visiting. And that would be Camden Market in North London (where I am based) on a Saturday. If you happen to be here on a fine, warm, sunny Saturday, which is a rarity even in summer, then that's just perfect! How to get there? Take the Northern Line of the London Underground and get off Camden station and just follow the beeline to the market.

To me, it's like Baclaran or Divisoria, lots of second-hand shops and stalls selling all sorts of things, it's just lovely if that's your kind of thing.

I could go on and on about that place and other places to see, but I guess you have better things to do. So, when I have better things to say and comment on (share is another word for it) then you'll hear from me again. Until then, keep up the good work.

—GOYIT LANDICHO,
glandicho@hotmail.co.uk

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Cop chief out of newsman slay probe

By Ryan D. Rosauro and Hernan P. dela Cruz
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIPOLOG CITY—Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao yesterday announced that he was reconstituting Task Force Cantoneros and was removing Supt. Jufel Adriatico, the provincial police chief, from it.

"I give in to the wishes of the family," Lomibao told reporters after meeting the Cantoneros family.

Family members said earlier that they were apprehensive of Adriatico's participation in the investigation. The officer is a brother-in-law of Zamboanga del Norte Gov. Rolando Yebes, who had been the object of Cantoneros' tirades.

The slain broadcaster worked for dxAA-FM, a station owned by the family of former Gov. Isagani Amatong.

Yebes and Amatong are political rivals.

Yebes has already appealed to his critics to spare the Cantoneros case from becoming political, saying it would only muddle the investigation. "I do not have an ax to grind against him," Yebes said.

Lomibao visited the wake of Cantoneros around 10 a.m. yesterday, accompanied by Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, Western Mindanao Area police chief, and Adriatico.

Querol, who was directed to name Adriatico's replacement, said Supt. Julmunier Jubail would immediately assume duties in the task force. Jubail is the deputy director for administration of the regional police.

Lomibao also ordered Querol to "replace those members who are from the place." They included Supt. Tomas Hizon, Dipolog police chief, allegedly a close ally of Dapitan Mayor Dominador Jalosjos, who was also a subject of criticisms by Cantoneros.

Lomibao said he would write Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation to ask him to relieve lawyer Oscar Tomanong, NBI district chief of Dipolog, from the task force and assign a new one.

Wene Montallana, a colleague of Cantoneros in radio DxAA-FM, expressed "great satisfaction" at Lomibao's decision.

"It is a logical move. At least there is now a fresh perception of independence in the way Task Force Cantoneros will conduct itself," he told the INQUIRER.

Yebes told reporters he "would not stand in the way" of Adriatico's relief from the task force "if the top police leadership sees it fit for a speedy resolution of the case."

Lomibao's visit added steam to the investigation, with media colleagues and the family of Cantoneros banking on it "to spur the search for the truth."

"I came here to give it a special concern," Lomibao said.

The bottom line, he said, was to tell investigators "to give their best so that this case will be solved at the earliest possible time."

"I promise you, we will do our best. As soon as possible we want this solved. By solved, we mean that we can identify the suspects, we can arrest the suspects so that we will give justice to Mr. Cantoneros," he said.

"For every death of a newsman or a media man, freedom is diminished because freedom of the press is one of the hallmarks of democracy in the Philippines or even in the world," he said

Cantoneros will be buried at the municipal cemetery on Saturday.

Swift justice

"I went there to give the case a special attention. It was their recommendation to remove (the two officers from the task force) so it was done as a confidence-building measure," Lomibao said.

The PNP chief acted on the suggestions of wounded journalists or of families of slain journalists to relieve certain police officials from their posts following the attacks.

Speaker Jose de Venecia on Saturday said he would donate P2 million to help solve the series of murders of Filipino journalists and help pay for the education of the victims' children. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Philip C. Tubeza*

Reporter gets death threats

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A senior reporter of the Cebu Daily News received several death threats through text messages on Friday and Saturday, prompting her to report these to the city police.

Suzanne B. Salva, 29, the chief of reporters of CDN, and a contributor of the INQUIRER Visayas Bureau, got messages warning her to slow down in writing news stories or she will be killed.

Salva said the death threats could have come from one of her news sources who was offended by her story but she asked to withhold the name, pending the investigation of the police.

Salva received the first threatening message at around 4:45 p.m. on Friday while she was covering at the Office of the Ombudsman Visayas. It came through an e-business card which said: "*PATYON TIKA* SUSAN! *He* 3X" (I will kill you Susan!)

Four minutes later at 4:49 p.m., Salva got another message from her cell phone, saying "Your days are numbered."

Salva decided to report the matter to her superiors at the CDN on Friday afternoon. CDN publisher Eileen Mangubat, in turn, reported it to the Task Force Newsman in Camp Crame through Col. Pedro Tango and also to the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism and the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility.

The CDN published the story on Saturday, but the initial steps taken by the management did not stop the anonymous sender from sending another text message to Salva shortly before Saturday noon.

Salva, who has been covering the Cebu judiciary for seven years, said she had suspected the sender as one of her sources who would usually complain about perceived negative write-ups that had normally landed on the paper's front pages.

"My report is not personal. In fact, I make it a point to always get the side of this person," Salva stressed.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Gador, police director for Central Visayas, promised to act on the matter and has asked Salva to visit his office so they could assess the threats.

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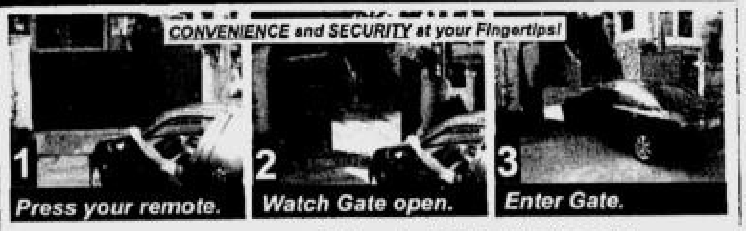

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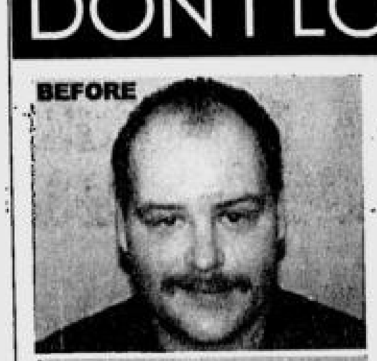

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Forests still gov't priority over mines, says DENR

BAGUIO CITY—The government still regards as high priority forest protection over mining, gauging from a series of rules guiding officials in the protection of nature parks and reserves, government environmentalists said.

Maritess Agsayaten, acting community assessment section chief of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, cited the government's new guidelines advocating for the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The rules harmonize the 1997 Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Ipra) and all forestry laws with the mining law, and acknowledge indigenous peoples' cultural links to local nature parks and forest reserves, she said.

The state of the country's biodiversity was discussed here by the Asian Regional Conference on the CBD last week during the meeting on the implementation of the CBD, the Ipra and the policy guaranteeing indigenous people's free, prior and informed consent before projects are undertaken.

Both conferences established that the government's dilemma over its deficit crisis had endangered the country's biodiversity.

Cost benefit

The cash-strapped administration has started measuring the benefits the country will derive from foreign-backed mines to justify offering mineral lands found near protected areas.

Agsayaten confirmed reports raised by the Legal and Natural Resources Center that the government had started comparing cost benefits from mining ventures with the cost of maintaining nationally protected wildlife parks.

The Samar Island National Park won over exploitable bauxite mineral lands by only a few pesos in the government's cost-benefit analysis, she said.

The World Wildlife Fund for Nature cited the case study of Dr. Marcelino Dalmacio, a technical adviser of the park's biodiversity division, who valued the park's ecology at $43.5 billion. The study estimates the park's bauxite reserves at $21 billion.

Joji Cariño, chair of both conferences, said countries implementing the CBD, such as the Philippines, had "narrowly" defined biodiversity issues as matters better addressed by intellectual property rights.

Most diverse

A paper prepared by Jill Cariño, chair of the Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center, said Philippine forests "are among the world's most diverse" that have "experienced a veritable biological meltdown over the past decades."

She said the country had "lost most of the forests, mangroves and coral reefs, and [had been] experiencing extinction rates unparalleled in Southeast Asia."

"One survey concluded that the Philippines represented 'the single worst-case scenario… of loss of biological diversity in tropical Southeast Asia,'" she said.

The government's own forest profile reveals that its "once rich forests are in various states of degradation," with less than a million hectares of primary forest lands remaining as of 1991."

She added: "Of the 15.88 million hectares classified as forest land, only 5.4 million hectares are covered with natural forests. This figure is less than 50 percent of forestland 20 years ago… In 2002, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources estimated an average net loss of 130,000 hectares of forests annually during the 1990s." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Lawmaker seeks help to ease ARMM poll tension

COTABATO CITY—A lawmaker of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has urged Malacañang and local traditional leaders to help calm down politicians "exuding early signs" of bloody regional elections in August.

Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA) Speaker Pro-Tempore Suharto Midtimbang expressed fears that the elections would be marred by bloody confrontations in most parts of the five-province-and-one-city ARMM.

The ARMM has a history of violence during elections as most politicians maintain private armies.

Although no election-related violence has been recorded so far in connection with the coming polls, politicians have started delivering what their rivals said were incendiary speeches.

Former Maguindanao Rep. Guimid Matalam, who is running for governor under the United Opposition, recently began his political tirades over a local radio station.

He dared his foes to settle the electoral contest in open gun battle.

"But I guess they are cowards," Matalam said in a radio interview.

Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan, whose son Zaldy is one of Matalam's rivals, said he was hopeful that despite the "open challenge," no one would take the call to turn the elections into a violent one.

The other gubernatorial candidates are business tycoon and former Datu Paglas Mayor Ibrahim Paglas III, Basilan Rep. and Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin and his cousin RLA Speaker Hatimil Hassan, chair of the Moro National Liberation Front's Council of 15, incumbent Gov. Parouk Hussin and Vice Gov. Mahid Mutilan.

Ampatuan said he was also hoping to get Matalam back into the province's coalesced political bloc in response to the national leadership's call for unity.

Ampatuan cited a long track of personal friendship and political alliance with Matalam.

In the last election, Matalam lost to Ampatuan when he ran for governor of Maguindanao under the Partido Democratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas.

Ampatuan said Matalam's defeat pained him.

Midtimbang, who represents Maguindanao's second district in the ARMM legislature, said both the traditional and national political leaders should step in to pacify any group which was painting a grim scenario of the August 8 polls.

Lakas-CMD National Vice Chair Gabriel Claudio said the K-4 Coalition, President Macapagal-Arroyo's vehicle to the presidency in the May 2004 elections, was not anointing any particular candidate for ARMM governor to avoid being perceived as "unduly meddling into the affairs of the ARMM."

Claudio said the K-4 Coalition was formulating a peace covenant among candidates for peaceful, orderly and credible ARMM elections. *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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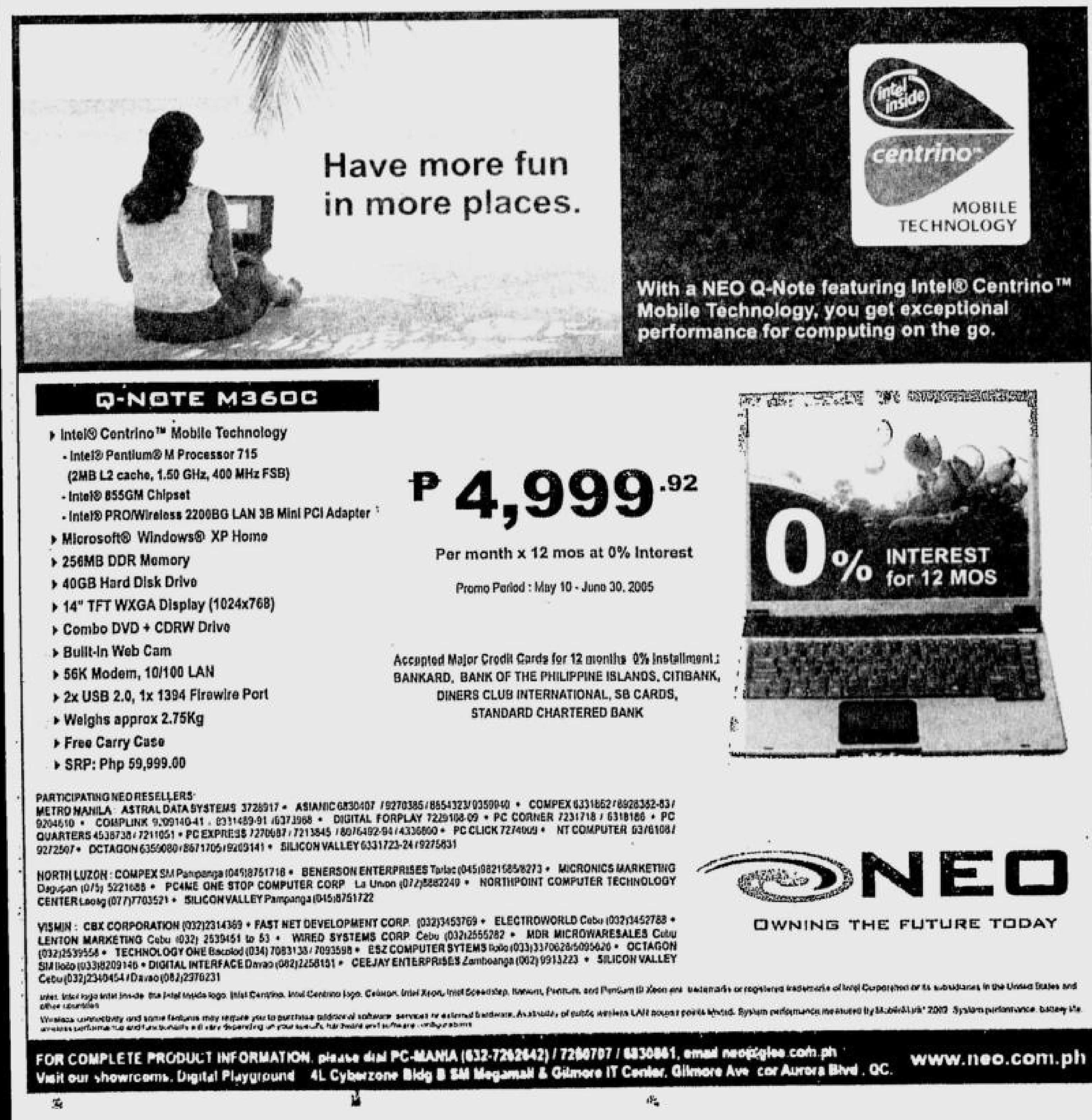
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Gov't scored for media killings

BAGUIO CITY—The teaching staff and participants in the 2005 Graciano Lopez Jaena community journalism workshop here denounced the government for its failure to arrest suspects in the killing of journalists, saying it has encouraged attacks against the media.

In a statement, the group, composed of professors from four universities and journalists from 11 Luzon provinces, said the government's "indifference and default" have encouraged a "systematic campaign to silence journalists" and "undermine press freedom."

"The government bears the responsibility for creating this culture of impunity," the group said.

It said the Arroyo government and the Philippine National Police—some of whose officers have themselves been implicated in the killings—are unable to provide journalists any protection.

"What is worse is that the Armed Forces of the Philippines, by labeling journalists' groups as 'enemies of the state,' is in effect encouraging further violence against journalists," the group said.

As if the murders were not enough, three bills which are supposed to help Filipino journalists are actually threats to their existence, media persons here said.

Gary Mariano, a professor of the De La Salle University and member of the Philippine Press Council, said Senate Bill 1120 (Right of Reply Act), SB 1828 (Magna Carta for Journalists) and the Anti-Terrorism Act are bad news for journalists even if the bills' intentions are good.

SB 1120, which Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had been trying to pass for several years now, calls for any person aggrieved with a news report to have the right to reply for free, within 24 hours and with little editing.

Failure to do so would mean that the newspaper would have to pay P10,000 for first violation, P20,000 for the 2nd and P30,000 and 30 days imprisonment for the third.

The National Union for Journalists of the Philippines in the Cordillera said the 24-hour reply would be impractical for weekly newspapers, for instance, and that the newspapers would have to allot more than three more pages for replies from any aggrieved persons.

SB 1828, on the other hand, seeks to give prestige for "professional" journalists by giving them formal title, accreditation, proper wages, security and protection.

"But the caveat is that, is journalism a profession?" asked Mariano.

SB 1828, which is being sponsored by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, calls for permanent suspension of an erring journalist, withdrawal of accreditation and the suspension of benefits, he said.

In previous versions, he said the fixed wages and benefits for journalists were included but were later cancelled.

Mariano said regulating the licensing of journalists would be awkward although this would not be the first time in the world because Italy and Portugal have regulated the practice of journalism.

Mariano said for SB 1120, all a journalist would do to prevent angry replies would be to be fair or at least to be perceived as fair.

Press councils would have to be effective to make SB 1828 impractical, he said. *Melvin Gascon, Desiree Caluza, Frank Cimatu and Donna Demetillo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, May 9, 2005
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 19:1-8
Gospel:	John 16:29-33

The disciples said to Jesus, "Now you are speaking plainly and not in veiled language! Now we see that you know all things, even before we question you. Because of this we believe that you came from God."

Jesus answered them, "You say that you believe! The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.

"I have told you all this, so that in me you may have peace. You will have trouble in the world; but, courage! I have overcome the world."

Commentary

Jesus must repeat again and again, when the disciples are quick to think they know and understand what Jesus is saying. Without the gift of the Spirit, they are on their own and cannot know the depth of what is happening, to Jesus or what will happen to them in time. Without this gift we too are glib in our belief, quick to respond without understanding and just as quick to scatter at the slightest sign of trouble. Jesus is patient, but his time is running out and he is desperately trying to make them see—he is going to die and they will all run from him, run from the cross, from giving witness to him and to acknowledging that he is their Master, their Lord and their God. He will be alone with his Father. He tells them, and us that we will have his peace in his Word, yet we're going to have trouble in the world—as did he and we will need his courage—the gift of his own Spirit. This is what we wait for—the courage of God, Jesus' own Spirit.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Consolidation of cases—Consolidation is aimed to obtain justice with the least expense and vexation to the litigants. The object of consolidation is to avoid multiplicity of suits, guard against oppression or abuse, prevent delays and save the litigants unnecessary acts and expense. Consolidation should be denied when prejudice would result to any of the parties or would cause complications, delay, prejudice, cut off, or restrict the rights of a party. In the present case, the trial court acted in the exercise of its sound judicial discretion in denying the motion of the petitioners for the consolidation of LRC Case No. P-97-2000 with Civil Case No. 109-M-2000. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, Spouses De Vera v. Agloro, G. R. No. 155673, January 15, 2005) By R.B. Vera

GMA ouster calls echo nostalgia for strongman

From page A1

be worse than the disease they seek to cure.

Although the bishops are all for "immediate change of the system," it is not clear whether they approve of the insurrectionary approach of the disgruntled cabal of retired officers. But what is clear is that the bishops and their equally disaffected cohorts in civil society will have no place in a military junta.

What is even less clear is whether the ground is ready for a mass mobilization for another "people power."

The calls were mounted in the midst of the intensified allegations of corruption in the administration, vaguely linking persons close to the President to "jueteng" payoffs.

What concerns me and what disturbs a number of sober-minded citizens is that the calls echo what I earlier described as the "nostalgia for a strongman."

Almonte's framework

This nostalgia was expressed and given some kind of intellectual framework by retired Gen. Jose Almonte, one of the leading figures of Reform the Armed Forces Movement, which plotted against the Marcos regime during its declining days. Almonte is also closely associated with former President Fidel Ramos, an epitome of strong executive leadership that got things done.

In a talk to the Foundation for Economic Freedom on Jan. 18, Almonte articulated the thesis of the strongman or the man on horseback.

He said, "Three and a half years into her rule, President Arroyo has yet to relieve Filipinos of their despair about our country's prospects, which had befallen them during the Estrada administration. So far, she has failed to deploy the moral power latent in the presidency, which alone can elicit the civic commitment of citizens.

"So far, she has been little more than a consummate politician—whose first obligation is to those who paved her way to power. And, since her support in the May 2004 elections ... Mrs. Arroyo has accumulated many political debts indeed," Almonte said.

He said, "Our young people seem to feel this nation lacks the capacity—and the will—to win the future. So that their overwhelming [desire] seems to be to migrate to some less benighted country, while some of their elders—who should really know better—are beginning either to call for armed revolution, or to voice their longing for an 'honest' dictatorship."

Wounded people

Almonte noted that "even the Philippine Church now describes Filipinos as a wounded people." This description raises the question, are these wounds self-inflicted?

The Philippine state is "too weak, whether to defend people's constitutional rights or to prevent their abuse," Almonte said. "We still cannot take for granted the supremacy of civilian authority over the military."

He said "spells of strongman rule will always be a liability. But ... the more immediate problem is 'democratic exhaustion'—the erosion of confidence in elected government."

Almonte cited a United Nations report which said that Latin American countries faced a fresh challenge to political stability, in which "popular disenchantment with democratic government is apparently breeding nostalgia for strongman rule."

He said: "Nowadays—with the economy in crisis—all too many Filipinos long for a leader strong enough to knock heads together and point the country in the right direction."

So far, Almonte's description of this nostalgia reflects political reality in the Philippines.

What makes me uneasy is that strongman rule does not provide a viable option to an ineffective and weak government.

Quick fix

The fascination with strongman rule offers a quick fix to a democratically elected but weak government. It conjures up an illusion that with strongman leadership things would be better.

Almonte, the old soldiers' cabal represented by Abat and the bishops are besotted with and seduced by the strongman syndrome as the immediate solution to the political and fiscal stalemates that grip the nation.

Our flirtation with the strongman solution in the past was a deep disappointment.

In the late 1960s, there was a clamor, especially from the middle and upper classes, for the imposition of law and order amid the insurgency of the Left and the unruliness of the political warlords of the Right.

Marcos responded and declared martial law.

Corrupt authoritarian system

He staged a coup on democracy from within by demolishing the constitutional system that installed him to the presidency through electoral means. The outcome was worse than all the ills the martial law regime had sought to correct, including corruption and legislative gridlock under the old two-party system.

What we got in exchange for a strongman was an even more corrupt authoritarian system, and an intensified Left-wing insurgency.

The difference in today's nostalgia for a strongman is that no one, either from the political opposition or the military, could fit the bill of an "honest" dictatorship.

Those seduced by the strongman formula are thinking of a Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore or of Charles de Gaulle of France. We don't have the culture and the events that produced the emergence of these extraordinary "men of the hour."

If Ms Arroyo were deposed tomorrow, we would have gotten rid of the most reviled and unpopular leader in recent Philippine history, but we are not going to have an "honest" strongman.

Vacuum

We will be left with a political vacuum which the bishops, the generals and Almonte have offered nothing to fill.

Ms Arroyo is the favorite flogging beast of her numerous opponents, but if a junta takes her place, it is certain a junta will know where to send its critics right away—Corregidor Island.

Maybe there is an exhaustion with the electoral system. The only realistic alternative left to us is to make that system, no matter how flawed, work. So far, the obsession and the preoccupation of the political class is to see to it that it does not work.

That system must be shown that it can deliver results. There are more than enough mechanisms and processes in that system that will allow it to work.

Ms Arroyo is merely incidental in that system—whether we hate her or not. A strongman is a mythical figure in Philippine politics. So let's stop daydreaming of a strongman messiah.

The call of the hour is to let the present system work. For example, the test is to get the value-added tax reform bill out of the congressional hellhole where it has been staying too long.

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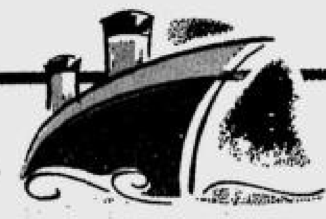

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Dogs unleash protest against cruelty

From page A1

awareness of the need for responsible pet ownership and to control the spread of rabies.

"Why do you kill us?" read a placard strapped to the back of a Dalmatian that joined the parade along a 5-km stretch of Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

A Pomeranian-Spitz, wearing a crown of red roses, and an English bulldog wearing a red scarf around its neck, were among the dogs that strutted their stuff.

"We hope to change the image of the country from a dog-eating nation to a dog-loving nation," the PCCI said in a statement.

Several canine clubs, animal welfare organizations and individual dog lovers who believe in the cause joined the event.

As early as 4 a.m., dog owners started to arrive with their pets in tow. The walk started at 7 a.m. and dog owners and dogs packed Roxas Boulevard as they marched from Rajah Sulayman Park to the Quirino Grandstand and back.

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) served as marshals in the event. Mayet Prenda, a BSP staffer, said around 150 boy scouts helped distribute water and maintain traffic flow.

"Volunteer veterinarians from PCCI and an action team from the local city government were also on call for any emergency," San Pedro said.

Dogs 'r' us

There were 82 participants from the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) led by president Nita Lichauco and director Anna Hashim-Cabrera.

"Hopefully, this event would show the government that we denounce the inhumane ways of controlling the dog population in the country," Cabrera said. "It's about time that the Animal Welfare Act of 1998 was strictly enforced."

Actor Mark Gil, a volunteer for PAWS, brought Amber, a Shar-Pei and Ginger, a pug. He said he hopes that one day more people would understand the passion owners have for their pets.

Luis Buenaflor of the Animal Kingdom Foundation, a UK-affiliated organization working to stop the dog meat trade, joined the walk because "we [want to] bring attention to the plight of the maltreated Philippine mongrel. It also goes with our thrust for the elimination of the dog meat trade."

But what caught everyone's attention was the group, Compassion and Responsibility for Animals (Cara), made up of foreigners and locals proudly walking their native Philippine dogs.

"We call them Pinoy dogs, not *askal* or street dogs," said Yasmin Jadwani, founder of Cara.

Cara seeks to promote the better treatment of animals, and the spaying and neutering of pets to help curb the proliferation of unwanted cats and dogs.

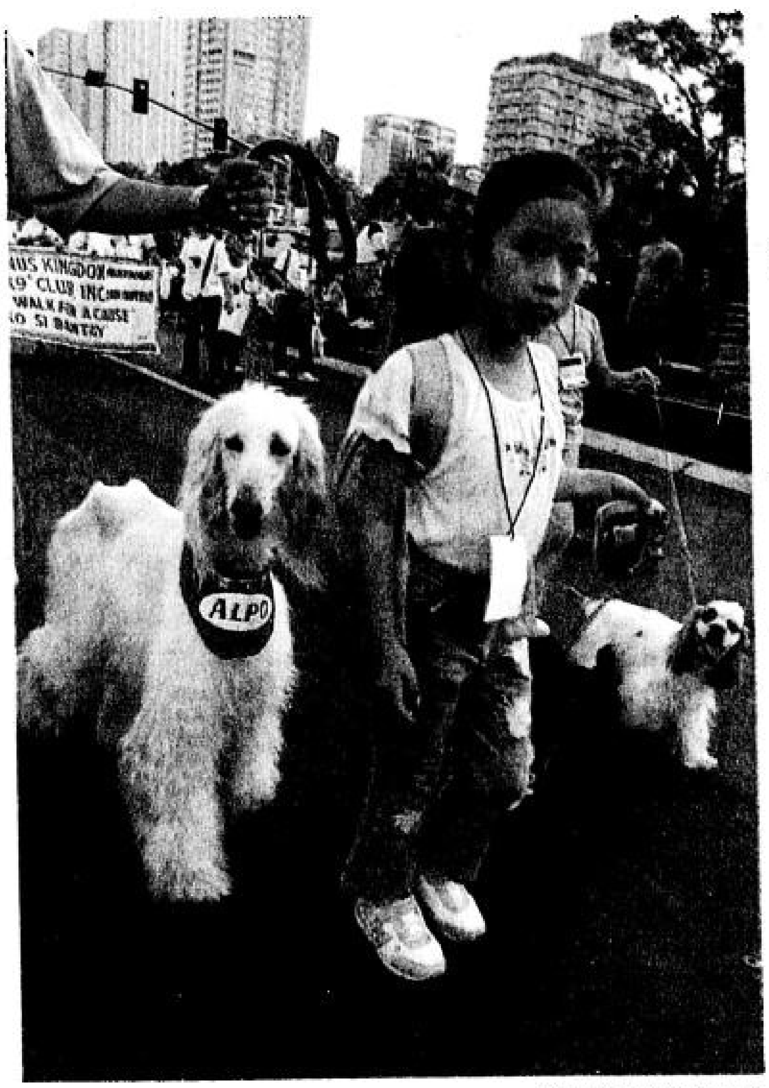
The K-9 unit of the Philippine National Police also came in full force.

Dog faints

The walk started at 7 a.m. with some of the dogs already feeling the heat. Two hours later, a Chow Chow collapsed due to heat stroke. It was immediately given first aid by Dr. Edwin Salagosta, a veterinarian from the PCCI, assisted by Dr. Dave Arceo of PAWS.

Chow Chows have a thick double coat suitable for cold weather, not a hot summer walk by the bay.

"In cases like this, you have to immediately cool them down," Salagosta said. "If possible, if the dog is conscious, submerge him in cold water or even ice."



AN AFGHAN hound, poodle and a Cocker Spaniel are led by their human friends on the protest walk along a 5-km stretch of Roxas Boulevard.

ERIK ARAZAS

Five other canines suffered heat stroke including a Saint Bernard and a Rottweiler.

Some of the pooches looked exhausted on the way back to the venue, the owners had no choice but to carry their pets. But the big dogs like German Shepherds, Great Danes, pit bulls, Belgian Malinois and Bullmastiffs endured the heat.

Most of the mongrels, observed one participant, didn't seem to mind the heat at all.

Second dog walk

One dog owner thought it would have been better to have held the walk during the cooler months, or at a much earlier time or, perhaps, later in the afternoon to avoid the scorching heat of the sun.

The event was originally scheduled for February, then moved to March 20. When several provinces showed interest in joining, the PCCI decided to move it to May 8.

Salagosta added that preparations for a gathering of this magnitude were no joke, but "with the successful reception of people and dogs, there is a possibility for a second nationwide dog walk." *With AP and AFP reports*

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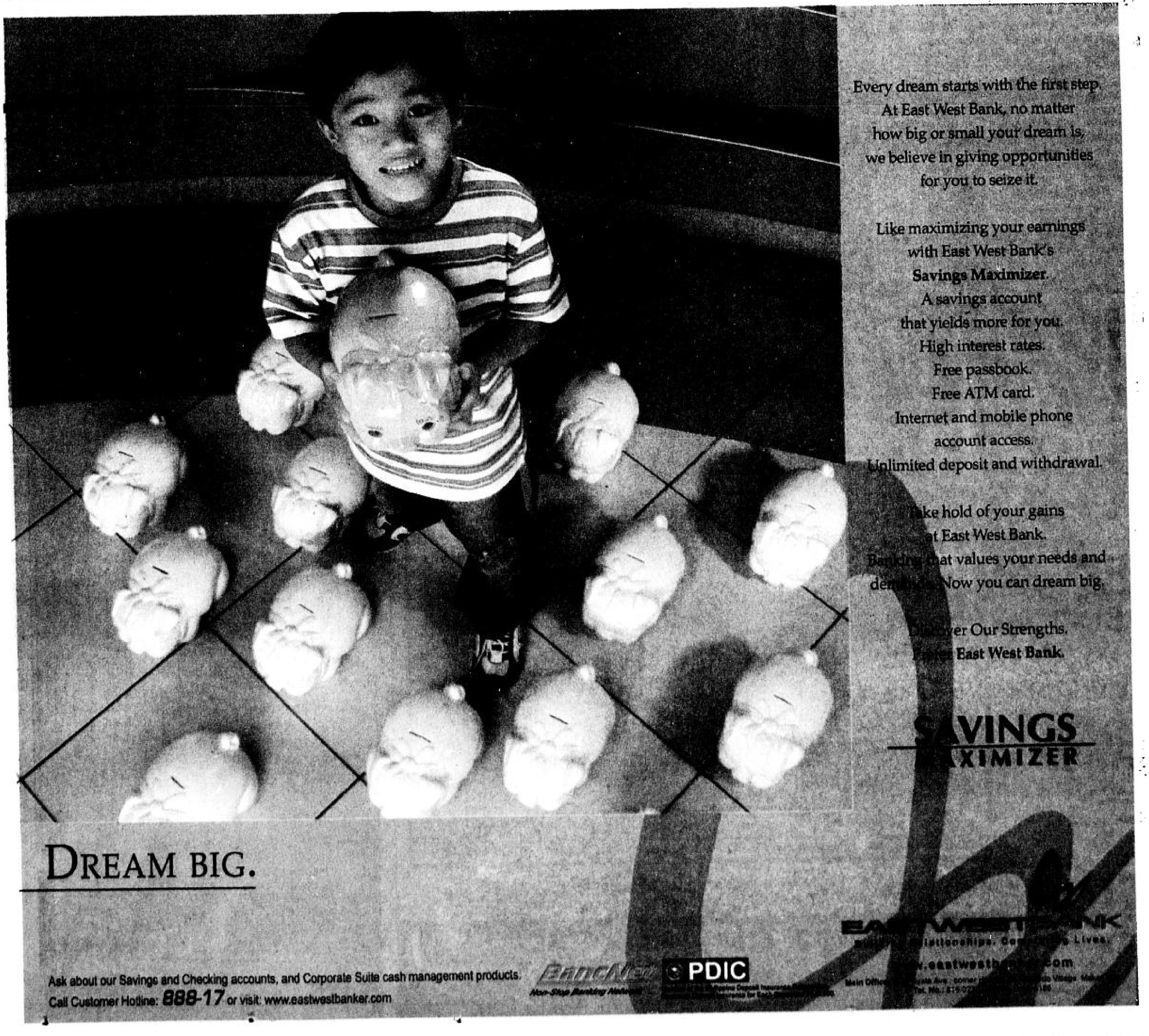

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Falling concrete kills man

By Margaux C. Ortiz

DEATH came from above.

Nineteen-year-old Daniel Natividad was standing outside a building along Tomas Mapua Street in Sta. Cruz, Manila, when a thick slab of concrete fell on his head.

Suffering severe injuries to his skull, Natividad of Solis Street, Tondo, eventually died.

Two other persons, an unidentified female street vendor and an unidentified male passerby, were injured when some of the fallen concrete shattered on the pavement and hit them with debris.

Detached

According to a report of the Western Police District Homicide Division, the slab of concrete got detached from the fifth floor of the building at the corner of Pillarica Street at about 1:15 p.m.

It was not immedaitely known why the slab, which was part of the concrete finishing of the building, got detached.

However, poor construction could be eyed since the building was estimated to be only about 10 years old, police said.

In July last year, a five-year-old, multi-story building at the corner of Juan Luna and Padre Rada streets in Divisoria fell on its side due to alleged poor construction.

Makati opens race to the sky as part of anniversary rites

By Tarra V. Quismundo

GOT THE GUTS to race up and down the stairs of a high rise?

Taking the test of stamina and will power to its skyline, Makati City has opened a challenge to all who would dare climb up and down the stairs of the 22-story Makati City Hall building.

As part of the city's celebration of its 335th foundation anniversary, the local government will be holding a vertical marathon that will take participants on a dash up the topmost floor of City Hall, and then back down.

The event, organized with the help of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Trap), will be held at 8 a.m. on May 28.

"The Makati City Hall vertical marathon qualifies as an adventure sport in the urban setting," said Trap vice president and race director Red Dumuk, in a statement.

All who believe they could complete the race the fastest may enter the competition, as long as they are 18 years old and above. Registration forms are available at the satellite office of the Philippine Olympic Committee at the Rizal Memorial Stadium in Manila.

ANOTHER DEADLY FIRE

Businessman dies after daring rescue

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A BUSINESSMAN died after a fire ravaged his building in Manila early yesterday morning, barely three weeks after a family of five perished in a blaze that razed their residential and commercial building in Binondo.

Arson investigators identified yesterday's victim as Henry Go Kiat, 55, of 1617 Santiago St., Paco, Manila.

According to FO1 Jerome Pascual, the fire began at 2:14 a.m. at the second floor of Kiat's four-story building.

Kiat, who was sleeping with his family when the fire started, was trapped in the fourth floor's bathroom.

The victim was later rescued by firefighers who braved the burning building.

Kiat was brought to the Manila Doctors Hospital but still died, possibly due to smoke inhalation, fire probers said.

The fire was put out at 5:06 a.m. and destroyed P500,000 worth of property, Pascual said.

Kiat's death occured as firefighters urged homeowners to keep their backyards clean to save firefighters the hassle of responding to grass fires.

Because of the intense heat, grass and piles of garbage may easily catch fire and may lead to a bigger blaze if not immediately given attention by firefighters.

"House owners should regularly trim the grasses in their backyards," FO1 Salvador Norberte of the Pasig City Fire Station said.

They may be small incidents compared to structural fires but responding to grass and rubbish fires still costs firefighters time.

Sadly, similar incidents have become more frequent.

"Malaking perwisyo rin," Norberte said.

Pasig firefighters responded to at least 20 brush and rubbish fires last month.

In the first five days of May, five grass fires were reported in the city.

Grass fires are usually triggered by cigarette butts thrown carelessly. Because they are very dry, grasses can easily catch fire.

There have also been cases of spontaneous combustion, Norberte said.

He said the intense heat, reflected by shards of glass left on garbage piles, could set fire to cans of used oil or other combustible materials.

There have been few cases when grass or rubbish fires spread to houses, Norberte said.

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Practice self-discipline, MMDA tells drivers in Metro Manila

By Tarra V. Quismundo

HAVE some self-respect.

The embattled Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) had that reminder to motorists yesterday, as it continued a relaxed implementation of two traffic schemes that the Makati court voided last week.

"They should have the shame not to blatantly disregard existing traffic rules, even if there is laxity in the implementation of the law. We hope they still follow [road rules]," said Angelito Vergel de Dios, MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director.

Since midnight of last Wednesday, the MMDA has relaxed the implementation of its foremost traffic apprehension instruments, the Metropolitan Traffic Ticketing (MTT) and the No-Contact Traffic Apprehension (NCTA) schemes.

This laying-low came after Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 145 Judge Cesar Santamaria issued an injunction against the two traffic schemes.

Upon the advise of its lawyers, the MMDA has decided to continue the enforcement of the two traffic schemes and shun the injunction for the meantime.

The MMDA counsels said the agency had the right to appeal the Makati court decision, even if it meant taking the case all the way to the Supreme Court.

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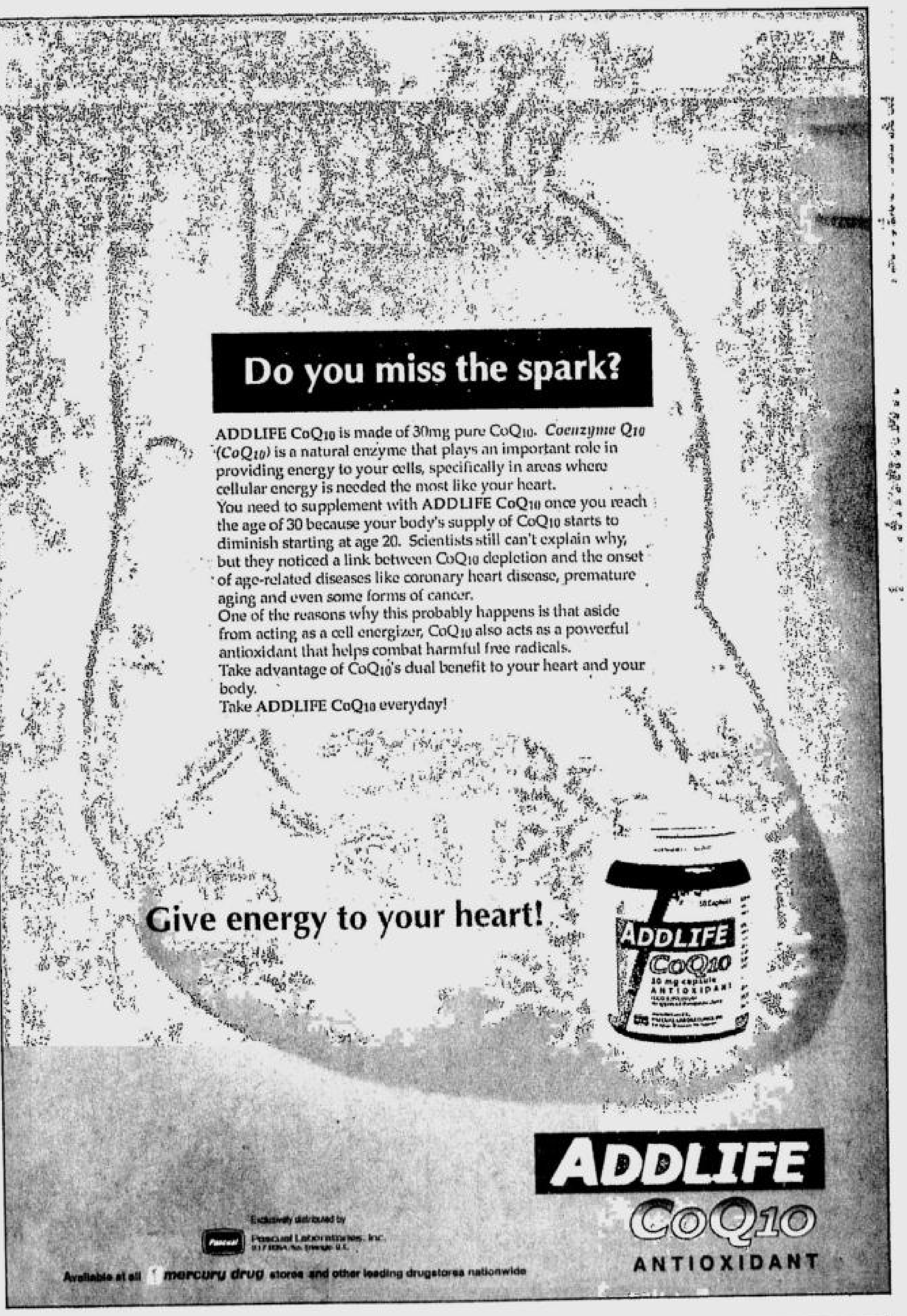
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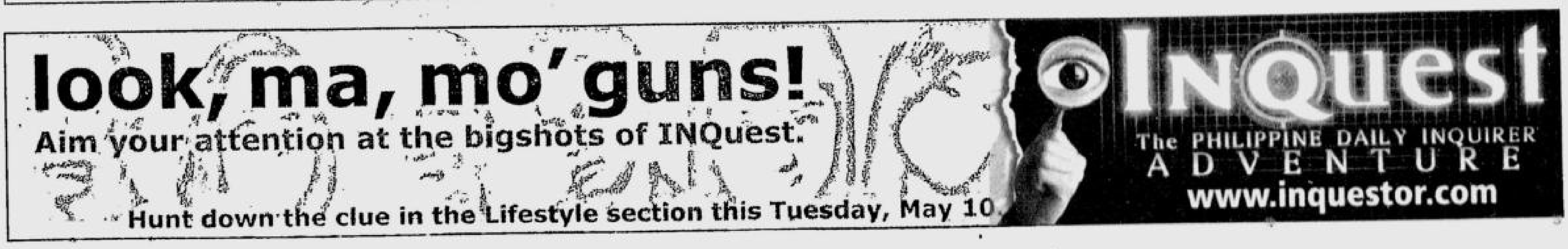
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Fil-Ams in RP quint pool mull boycott

PBA's tough stand stuns players

By Beth Celis

THE NATIONAL team aspirants who were placed in the PBA freezer pending the completion of their citizenship requirements are considering a boycott of the tryouts for the RP squad.

"The sudden suspension put all of us in a tough position," rued Talk 'N Text playmaker Jimmy Alapag. "We're all very upset, very confused.

"If we're suspended from playing for our mother ballclubs, then it follows that we can't play for the Philippine team, too."

Alapag is one of the suspended aspirants who were picked by national coach Chot Reyes for the RP pool. The others are Danny Seigle, Dorian Peña, Eric Menk, Tony dela Cruz, Rafi Reavis, Sonny Thoss, Mike Cortez and Jayjay Helterbrand.

Reyes sympathizes with the group, but he urged them to make a quick decision on what their plans are so he will have time to adjust.

Directly affected by the planned boycott is the PBA pocket tournament which starts today and features the Sydney Kings from Australia.

"I feel for them," Reyes said. "I sympathize with their plight. But I need to know their plans, so I can make my own."

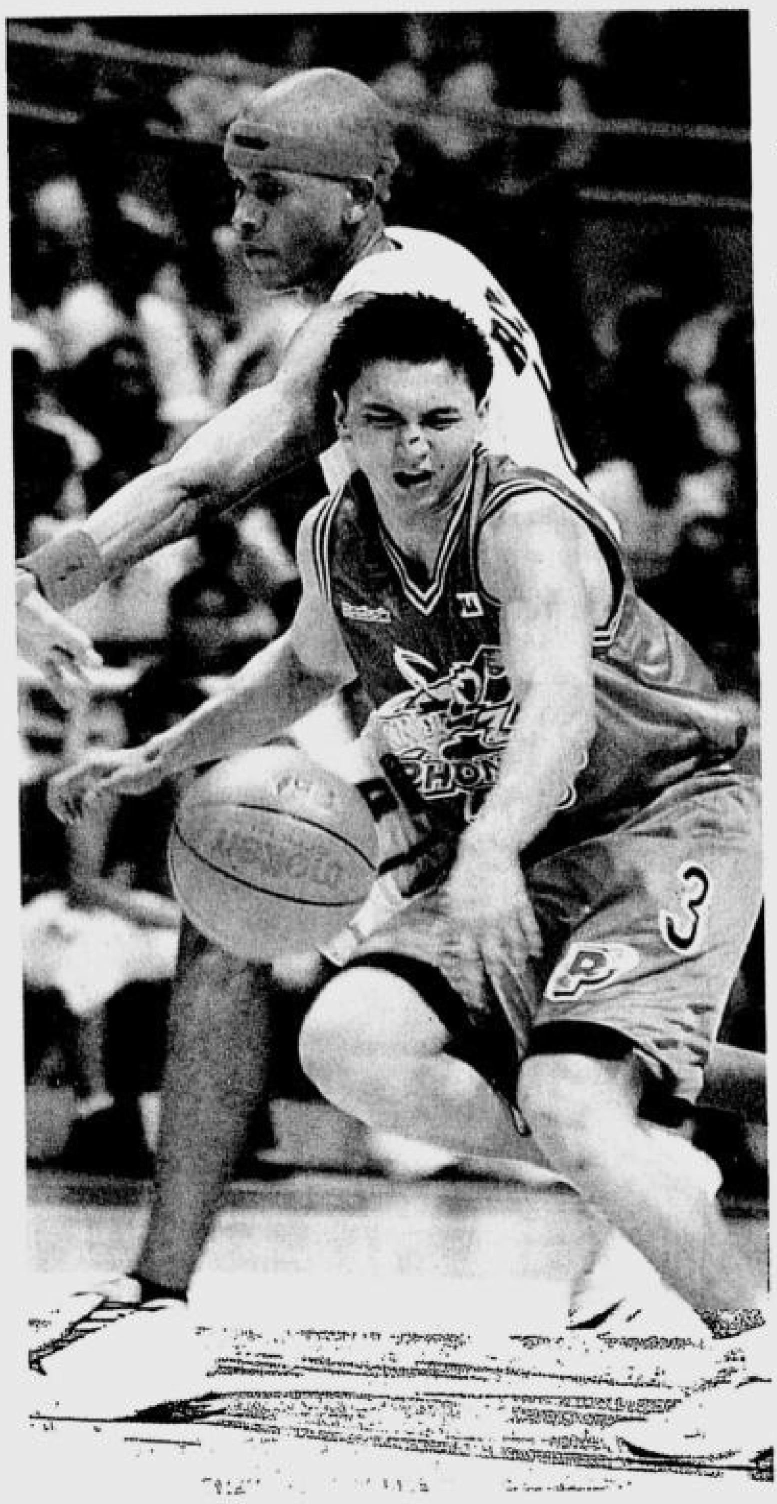
Alapag, who has yet to secure the naturalization papers of his mother, skipped Saturday's national pool workouts along with the other suspended Fil-Am aspirants.

"The group excused themselves from practice," said Reyes. "They said they meant no disrespect for me nor for the program, but they were still at a loss on what steps to take following the suspension.

"Some of them just don't feel right about being allowed to play for the national team but not for their mother ballclub."

Alapag said the sweeping suspensions, which affected some of the biggest names in the league,

FIL-AMS/ A26


JIMMY Alapag, in action against Rafi Reavis of Coca-Cola, says the PBA decision is a big shock to him and his fellow Fil-Ams. PDI PHOTO

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Israeli, Japanese rule Subic int'l triathlon

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SUBIC—Israel's Ran Alterman conquered the hilly course of this former American naval base on a hot and humid day to capture the 11th Subic Bay International Triathlon yesterday.

The 25-year-old Alterman swam respectably in the rectangular 1.5-km. course at the beachfront here, took the 40-km bike race by storm before finishing with the best time in the 10-km run to pool a total of 2 hours and 4.0 seconds.

Alterman bagged the $2,500 top purse, a trophy and a Speedo bag that went with it, but the crowd found a hero in his twin brother Dan, who engaged New Zealand's Ben Pulham in a courageous but futile duel for second place.

The 24-year-old Pulham, who has not won against any of the Altermans before, trailed the twins throughout and managed to catch up with Dan only in the last of the three laps around the restaurant strip by the bay.

"I saw him tottering from one side to another," said Pulham, who even tried to help Dan get on his feet. "But when he saw me, he suddenly bounced back and went on running."

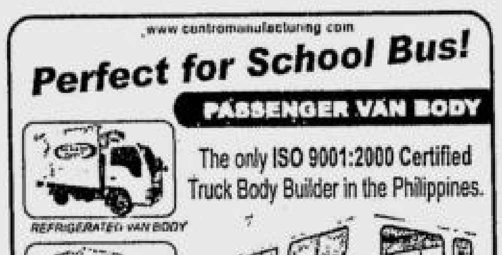
That transpired as Ran shouted from the finish line, egging his brother to keep up the pace. Pulham eventually finished in 2:01:34, 14 seconds ahead of Dan who collapsed at the finish and was rushed to the hospital.

"Even in the face of exhaustion, he was competitive," Pulham said of Dan Alterman.

Except for dizziness, Dan was reportedly recovering in the hospital.

Top Filipino bet Arland Macasieb finished in 14th place, more than 13 minutes behind the winner. The top Asian finisher during last year's Asian championships here is nevertheless assured of a slot in the RP team for this year's Southeast Asian

ISRAELI/ A26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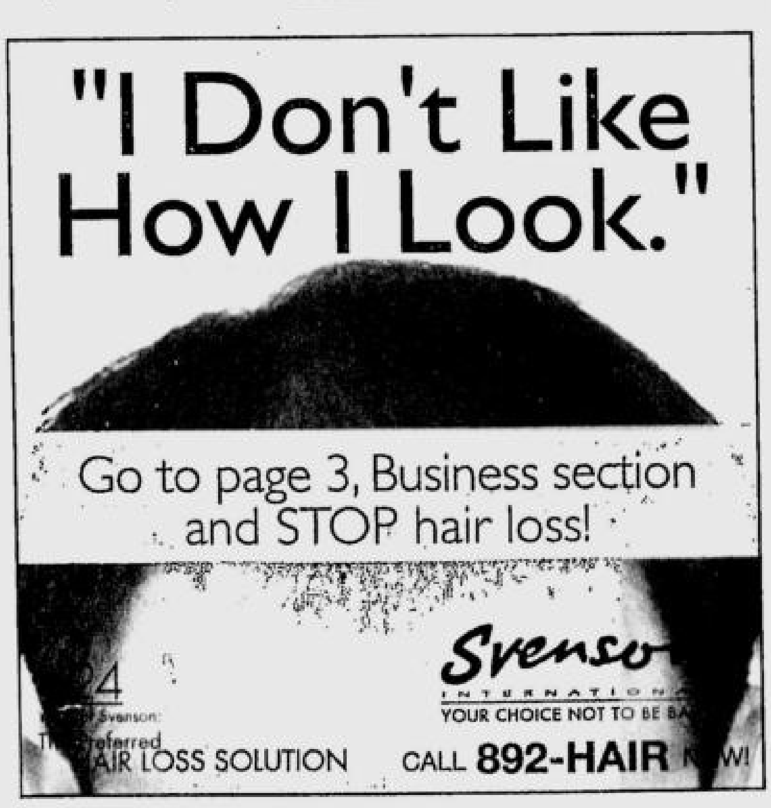
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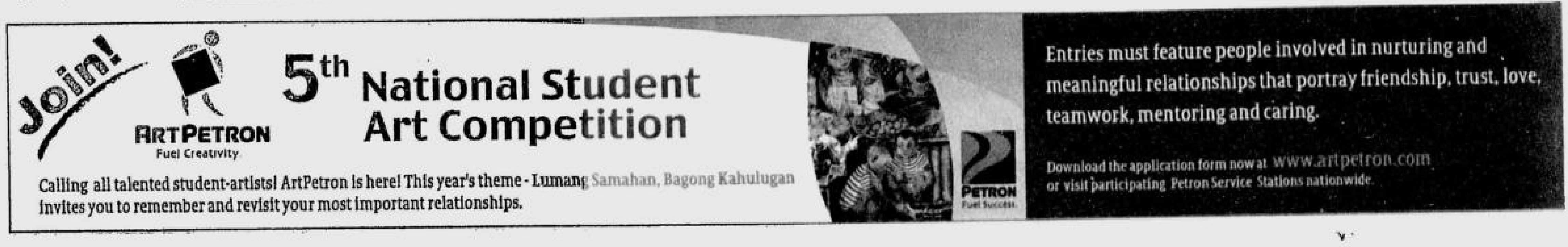
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Mike Arroyo need not mess with his anatomy

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HE MUST'VE been heaped verbal abuse, if not threatened with bodily harm, and the official who unknowingly squealed on the controversial whereabouts of the First Gentleman in Manny Pacquiao's last fight at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas last March came out scathed and shaken by his mistake.

Cried the punished fellow, a congressman: "*Pare, napahamak mo ako kay* FG. Complimentary *lang naman yung* room. *Kawawa ako rito pare ko* (You've put me in deep trouble with FG. The stay at the hotel was just complimentary. Pity me, please)," he texted this reporter.

That was frantic as an S.O.S.

* * *

Before that incident, this elected government official from the South had tried to invite this reporter for dinner over at the very exclusive MGM Grand Villa 1.

"Trying to call u. Wld u lyk 2 join us for dinner now? M n Villa 1 hir in MGM. Thnx partner," he said in his first message.

The MGM Grand Villa was singled out in an earlier column by this reporter as the place where a heavyweight supporter of Pacquiao had stayed.

We had actually gotten a solid tip on the exact identity of the heavyweight Pacquiao supporter from a US-based Filipino media man who claimed trusting association with a Pinoy staff member connected with the MGM luxury sales division.

The tip from the MGM luxury section, also picked up by two other visiting RP sportswriters who expressed excitement in writing about it, said the stay at the Villa could total almost $20,000 a night, roughly P1 million.

* * *

The First Gentleman, Mike Arroyo, pointed out that the MGM Hotel website lists its "most expensive room as $6,000 per night."

Mr. Arroyo was right.

But do take note that the First Gentleman, identified by the congressman who unknowingly squealed on his hosts, stayed at the exclusive and luxurious *MGM villa*, not in an expensive room or a grand suite.

Before writing the column, in which we took extra care not to openly name the controversial Pacquiao supporter, we asked a friend to check the MGM website for details on the exclusive MGM villa.

It was learned that the MGM Villa 1 rents at only $16,000 a night.

However, the cost does not include taxes.

Also excluded were the undetermined fees and other plusses, maybe for the butler, masseurs, cook, entertainers, etc.

* * *

Here's the catch: Hotel insiders, including a member of the luxury sales staff, who furnished this reporter details **on the excessive lifestyle inside the MGM villa, complete with a colorful staff fit for the richest of the rich, said the total fee, counting the taxes, undetermined plusses, should easily reach $20,000, give or take a few bucks.**

"If they can find a room in Las Vegas that's $20,000 per night, I'll cut off my balls," Mr. Arroyo had dared his critics.

This amazed reporter wrote that column on the premise that it was both unbelievable and improper for a Filipino government official, going by the shameless runaway poverty prevailing in the country, to stay in a place as majestic and opulent as the MGM Grand Villa 1.

The rent may have been a few weak pesos short of a million (a night). But the stay was still immoral, a lie, whether the villa was offered free or paid for by other parties.

Repeat: This reporter had tried not to openly identify the Filipino occupants of the opulent villa during Pacquiao's stay at MGM.

However, we've no recourse but print the final text message from that punished congressman, following the fireball dare from the First Gentleman.

* * *

Who were the occupants of Villa 1, we asked, after we had received the invitation to dine over at the MGM Villa.

The solon texted back: "Arroyo bros. Mayor Palmares of Iloilo & friends. *Inimbita lang din ako. Ano gawin nyo sa* Cuba? Safe trip *pare ko*."

That's all. Maybe a different First Gentleman had stayed at the MGM villa last March?

Mr. Arroyo's lawyers and defenders are free to check on the authenticity of the text messages.

Look, if the feisty heavyweight featured in this report was not the same fellow openly identified by his congressman friend as Mike Arroyo, the President need not worry.

The First Gentleman did not have to gamble on his tender anatomy (to prove his manhood).

The hard facts are there.

FIESTA CONFERENCE

FedEx, SLR hammer depleted opponents

By June Navarro

THE LOSS of key players made San Miguel and Shell easy targets last night. And a lemon of an import made things even worse for the Turbo Chargers.

The FedEx Express wasted no time exploiting the advantage as they coasted to a 101-79 victory over Shell in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Makati Coliseum.

Sta. Lucia, pouncing on the same edge, drubbed San Miguel, 97-80, in the second game.

The Turbo Chargers and the Beermen lost several key players yesterday owing to a league-mandated suspension slapped on Fil-Ams with still incomplete citizenship documents.

Shell was without top local Anthony dela Cruz, defense specialist Chris Jackson and back-up guard Kalani Ferreria while San Miguel played minus top scorer Danny Seigle and big man Dorian Peña.

FedEx import Anthony Miller made Shell's deficiencies even more glaring by banging in 25 points and collaring 27 rebounds to turn his duel with the 7-foot-1 Melvin Robinson into a mismatch.

John Ferriols chipped in 16 points while Renren Ritualo and Wynne Arboleda added 14 each as the Express claimed their sixth win in 13 games.

"Contrary to what others think, the pressure to win is high because of the absence of Dela Cruz," said FedEx coach Bong Ramos.

Sans Dela Cruz, Ferreria and Jackson, the Turbo Chargers relied mostly on Robinson, Ronald Tubid, Billy Mamaril and Chris Calaguio.

Tubid did his part, firing 18 points and going four-of-12 from three-point range, but Robinson failed to deliver, pouring in just 14 points and seven rebounds.

Calaguio and Mamaril added 12 and 10 points apiece.

Absorbing their second defeat in a row, coach Leo Austria and the Turbo Chargers dropped to 6-8, just a full game ahead of tailenders Barangay Ginebra and Coca-Cola.

Sta. Lucia, on the other hand, climbed to a 7-7 record while San Miguel ended up sharing second place with idle Alaska after dropping to 8-5.

The scores:

First Game

FEDEX 101—Miller 25, Ferriols 16, Ritualo 14, Arboleda 14, De Ocampo 11, Dacia 7, Gonzales 4, Victolero 4, Bravo 2, David 2, Codiñera 2, Pingris 0, Billones 0.

SHELL 79—Tubid 18, Robinson 14, Calaguio 12, Mamaril 10, Alvarez 8, Yap 7, Sotto 4, Sharma 2, Cruz 2, Sta. Maria 2.

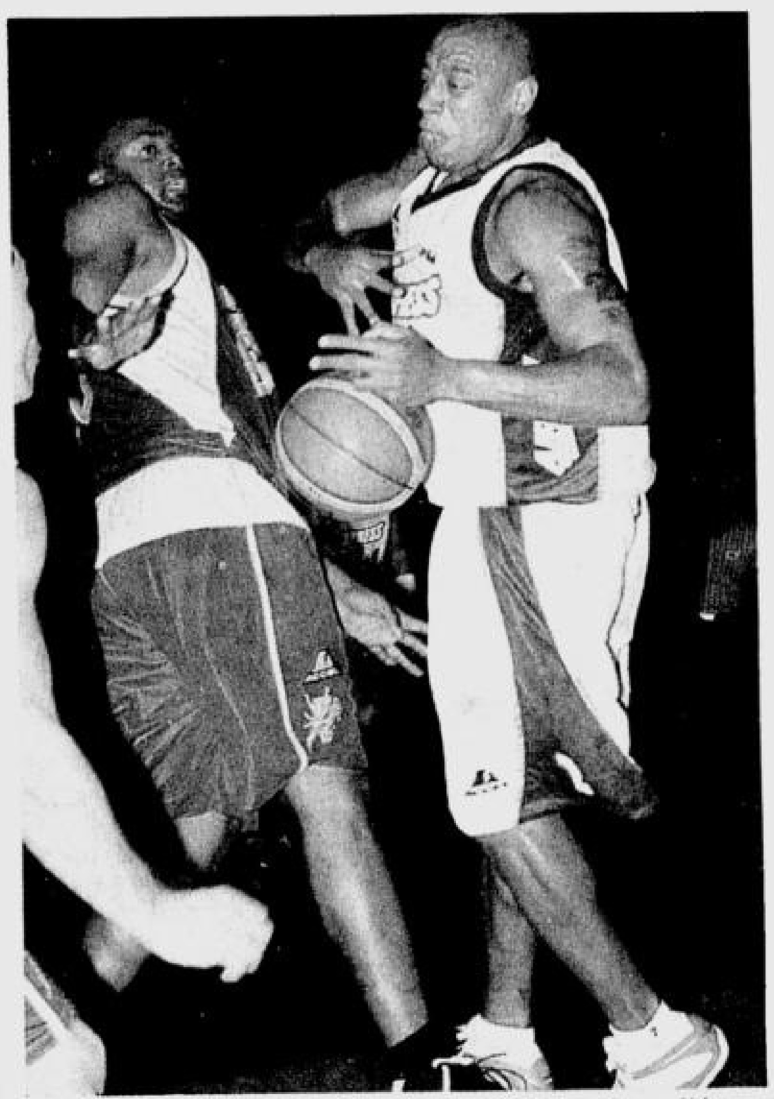
Quarters: 19-20, 48-37, 73-60, 101-79

Second Game

STA. LUCIA 97—Duremdes 39, Fletcher 19, Espino 14, Omolon 10, Mendoza 9, Cuan 4, Tolomia 2, Calimag 0, Santos 0, Agapito 0, Gonzales 0, Demape 0.

SAN MIGUEL 80—Burgess 22, Ildefonso 15, Mente 14, Racela 9, Belasco 9, Hontiveros 6, Lopez 5, Gamboa 0, Canlas 0.

Quarters: 35-19, 54-37, 76-59, 97-80



ANTHONY Miller of FedEx (right) has the ball knocked out of his hands by Shell's Melvin Robinson in last night's game. RUDY ESPERAS

Fil-Ams in RP pool . . .

From page A25

shocked those affected by the ruling.

"[I was] really, really shocked," Alapag admitted. "Like I've been playing here for three years and everything had been A-Ok until now. Jeff Cariaso has been in the PBA twice as long and he was suspended, too."

Alapag said they were all given up to Wednesday to complete their documents.

"I asked my parents to work on it but I don't think there is enough time to produce the papers," he said.

The players were set to advise Reyes about their plans yesterday.

Alapag, however, said the group intended to attend the pre-game session with Chot Reyes scheduled this morning.

Israeli, Japanese rule Subic . . .

From page A25

Games here in November.

In the women's race, Alessandra Araullo salvaged third place behind Japan's Rika Takahashi, who completed the course unchallenged in 2:16:51. India's Kavya Murthy came in second, seven minutes and 22 seconds behind.

Araullo timed 2:27:03.

The comely Araullo, who trained in Australia for a month to prepare for this event, rued the lack of help from her teammates whom she said failed to provide a draft, especially in the swim event where she finished last in 24:01.

She was trailed by RP's Ani Karina De Leon (2:28:12) and 15-year-old Ma. Melliza Lucas (2:29:31), who came in fourth and fifth, respectively.

ARAULLO: Best Southeast Asian finisher

In the Under-23 category, Lemuel Ching Yin of Hong Kong bagged the top prize after clocking 2:04:55 over the same course, followed by countryman Andrew Wright (2:05:00) and Indonesia's Syed Jabir (2:05:01).

The course took the runners from the beachfront for the swimming event to four bike laps up and down the hills of Binictican drive. They next ran three laps under the scorching Zambales sun.

Several ambulance units were deployed by the organizers but no major accidents were reported in the event organized by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Speedo, Power Bar, David's Salon and Skin and Face Spa, Stronghold Insurance, Asian Center for Insulation, Philippine Sports Commission, Fitness First, Smart Addict Mobile and Legenda Hotel.

SHERWOOD INVT'L

Bince-Cabrera pair takes it

TRECE Martirez, Cavite—Rodel Bince and Buddy Cabrera assembled a net 57 points on Saturday to run away with the overall championship of the third Sherwood Hills Invitational Cup 2005 here.

Despite an unexpected drizzle, the Bince-Cabrera tandem held it together and tamed Sherwood's fast greens to fashion out the win.

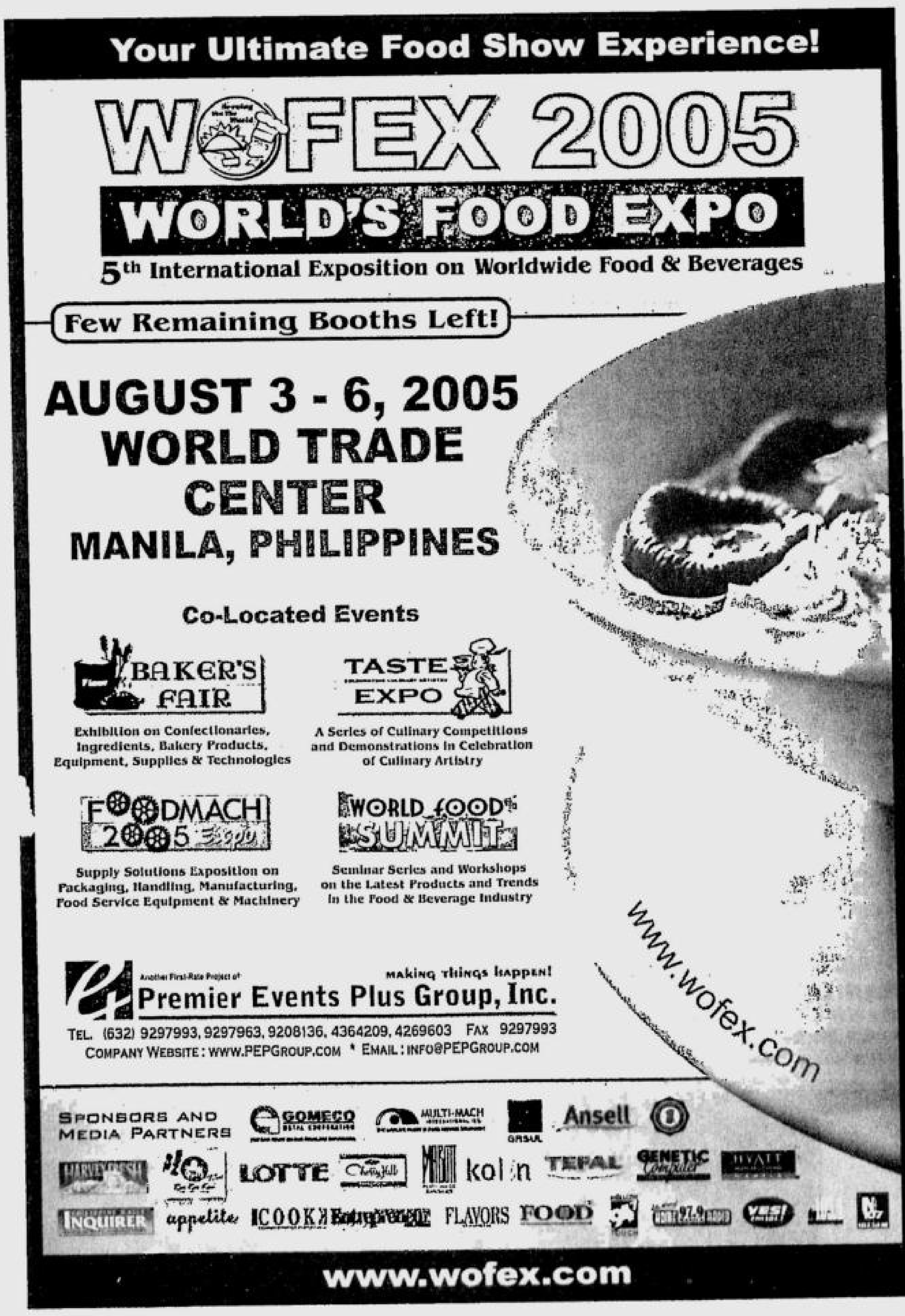
Along with all the division winners and the current club champions, Bince and Cabrera received their silver cup trophies from club chair Robert John Sobrepeña and House Committee head Arch. Ruben Payumo.

The Korean husband-and-wife tandem of CS Jin and ES Jin signed for a 62 to win Division 1. Danny Daez and Toby Abaya actually matched the Jins' output but lost in the countback. Eugene Ariegado and Larry Patnongon placed third with a 63.

Ding Adriano and Arthur Santos submitted a 59 to capture the Division 2 crown by two over Ricky and Terry de Castro. YJ Joo and partner Choi tallied a 62 for third place.

The one-day event, organized by the Sports and Games Committee with golf director Raymond Bonquin, had Splash Island, MRT Dev. Co., Wilson Sports, Golforce Inc., Smart Infinity, Timberpro, Corporate Air, Isuzu Phil., Camp John Hay Dev. Co., CJH Manor, Club Leisure, and Custom Clubmakers as major sponsors.

Asia Pacific Golf Corp., Berna International, Citibank, Coppertone, Golden Oats, Industrial Waste Systems, Information Professionals Inc., Ko Phil. Corp., Kork Inc., Poblador, Bautista & Reyes Law Offices, Vein Care and Warbird Security were the other backers.



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Mikola nails 3rd straight AF3 win

GUANGDONG, China—Indonesian ace Ananda Mikola proved untouchable anew but was forced to share the limelight with Filipino young gun Dado Peña who finished a fighting second Saturday in the incident-marred third leg of the 2005 Asian Formula Three series at the Zhuhai Circuit here.

After handily topping the qualifying session earlier Saturday, the 26-year-old Mikola raced true to form en route to his third straight win in the series. That boosted his front-running total in the drivers' championship to 60 points, counting the 40 he earned in sweeping the first two legs in Batangas last month.

The Indonesian star floored the pedal the moment the red lights went off and streaked to the finish with a time of 20 minutes and 12.529 seconds in 12 laps.

After a series of misfortunes in Batangas, the 17-year-old Peña, lead driver of the Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia, finally drove trouble-free to clock 20:14.955 around the 4.3-kilometer Zhuhai track. He emerged as the worthiest challenger going into the fourth leg of the series Sunday.

That distinction could have belonged to defending champion Christian Jones, the Australian lead man of Christian Jones Motorsport, who was forced to start from the pit lane when his first gear conked out just before the start.

He battled back from way down in the first lap and salvaged third in 20:15.304.

Another Filipino, JP Tuason of Tuason Racing School, also earned a podium spot, finishing second to Irishman Greg Murphy of Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia in the Promotions class for cars with chassis built in 1999 and older.

Another Irishman, Lee Farrell of Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO, was third in his AF3 racing debut despite starting from the pit lane.

"I just went out there and got my pace going," said Mikola, who now leads Jones by 18 points overall.

Irishman John O'Hara of Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Toms, who finished the race fourth (20:20.192), is running third with 32.

The starting grid for the fourth lap of the 12-stop series will be based on the order of finish in the third race. Race results can be accessed at www.asianf3.net.

Peña earned 15 points and improved his total to 25, seizing fourth overall from Briton James Winslow of Shell Kinetic PCSO, one of four drivers in the 14-man starting field who failed to finish the race, a victim of engine trouble in the first lap.

The three others—Promotions leader Moreno Soeprapto, who drives for Denso Hanjin JF3; Macau entry Rodolfo Avila, also of Hanjin; and Renan Morales of Fujitsu—also fell prey to either engine trouble or mishap.

Hardest hit was the 18-year-old Avila, racing in his home track, who was bumped by 2003 champion Pepon Marave of the Philippines in the ninth lap and was forced to retire after slamming into a wall.

Tyson Sy of Speedtech Asia, whose engine got busted in the qualifying, failed to join the starting grid despite attempts by his crew to fix the problem.

INDONESIA'S Ananda Mikola heads for the pits after a searing run that gave him his third victory in a row.

Jungolfers play best-ball at Riviera as tour resumes

JUNGOLFERS play the best-ball format when the seventh leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour is played today at the well-kept Couples and executive courses of the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

In the third team format used for the summer circuit, jungolfers will be competing in pairs at the 54-hole tournament backed by Samsung, Philippine Airlines and Unilever which will again offer trophies for top performers in six age-group classifications.

The kids had earlier played for their clubs, schools and organizations in the national club championships at Mt. Malarayat and Camp Aguinaldo, then got a taste of the Ryder Cup at Camp John Hay in Baguio.

Although players had been asked to select their partners, the organizing Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines bared that they will be using the blind draw scheme for those who fail to form a team.

Jungolf president Raoul Lachica said that the best-ball tourney is still in line with their thrust of exposing the kids to various formats early.

The Riviera leg also allows the summer circuit campaigners to tune up for next week's major tournament, the four-day Montecillo Cup: Philippine Junior Golf Championships at the Legends course of Manila Southwoods.

Meanwhile, AR Ramos, Ryan Monsalve and Abby Arevalo kept their winning ways in the lower categories in the sixth leg at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club course.

Orchard bet Wolen Superal continued to dominate his rivals in his division anew while Ramos, winner of the Pepsi Little People crown in Illinois last year, remained unbeaten in the boys Class E (7-8 years division) when he streaked to an eight-stroke victory in the tourney serving as the sixth leg of the summer circuit.

Arevalo topped girls Class F (6 and under) while Monsalve was still unchallenged in the boys side.

The other winners in the boys division were Nonoy Negrido, Emmanuel Kishida and Legrand Buan. Bringing home trophies in the girls division were Lee Seo Jae, Cyna Rodriguez, Katya dela Cruz, Marvi Monsalve and Dana Gonzales.

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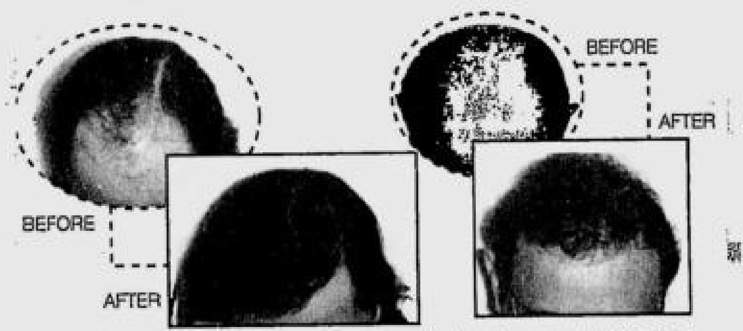

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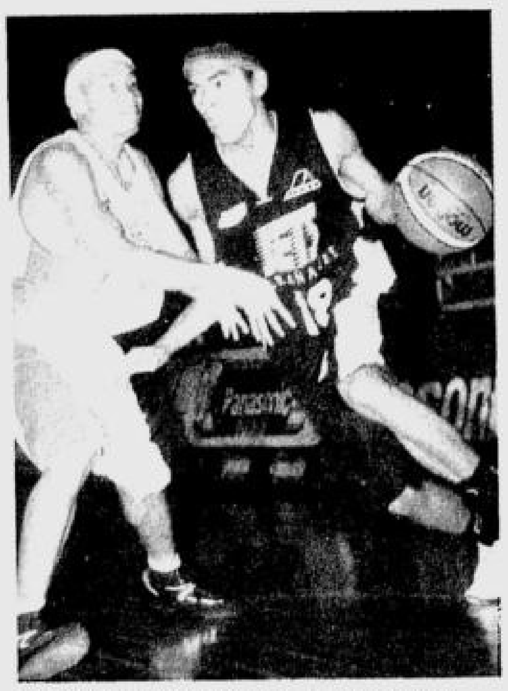
Forward Taguig cagers send Jets back to earth

DEFENDING Northern division champion Forward Taguig outclassed league surprise package Parañaque Jets, 77-58, with a fiery second-half explosion Saturday for its second straight win in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the C.P. Tinga gym in Taguig.

Playmaker Richard del Rosario scored seven straight points to propel Mayor Freddie Tinga's Taguig cagers to a 52-48 lead, which they never relinquished.

Vice Mayor and actor/TV host Anjo Yllana's Jets—who shamed the old Seaba-bound Philippine team to win the pre-tourney title—collapsed in the last 20 minutes after setting the pace in the first two quarters, 21-16 and 34-33.



PARAÑAQUE'S Alexander Bognot tries to get past Forward Taguig's Jimboy Robillos.

Over at the Valencia gym in Bukidnon, the Cagayan de Oro Stars rode on Julius Navales' late-game heroics to trim the host Golden Harvest, 65-57, for their first victory in two starts in the tournament supported by Panasonic, Accel, Molten, Spring Cooking Oil, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Philtranco, Sunbolt Energy Drink, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Cebuana Lhuillier, Prime Channel, Ping Ping Lechon, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

The Stars of former Misamis Oriental Gov. Antonio Calingin led by 12 early on, but nearly lost this until Navales scored eight of his game-high 20 points in the last 3:17 to hold off the boys of Mayor Jose Galario Jr.

"Julius (Navales) carried us down the stretch," said Stars coach Arlene Rodriguez.

The Jets, who nipped Laguna Spring, 68-67, in their NBC debut, started strong but self-destructed in the second half with a spate of turnovers.

Yllana called the shots for the Jets in the absence of head coach Jun da Jose.

"We're lucky the boys played better in the second half," said Taguig coach Danny Gavieres.

The scores:

Taguig 77—Robillos 11, Ricafuente 10, Villar 10, De Gula 9, Sinco 8, Dela Rosa 8, De Castro 6, Lozano 6, Lapinid 3, Dulay 3, Marucot 2, Magsambol 1, Reyes 0, Zablan 0.

Parañaque 58—Guiyab 11, Basilides 10, Rodriguez 8, Marquez 8, Tolantino 7, Bognot 5, Araman 3, Yambao 2, Lopez 2, Aquitania 0, Prado 0, Ruiz 0.

Quarters: 16-21, 33-34, 52-48, 77-58

CdO 65—Navales 20, Neri 11, Ortiguesa 10, Agusan 10, Dela Victoria 4, Rivera 4, Torres 2, Alfante 2, Jabagat 2, Numeran 0, Mendoza 0, Polistico 0.

VALENCIA 57—Adams 13, Taligatos 11, Berami 8, Celiz 7, Clavel 7, Cabili 5, Culdora 2, Toring 2, Mojado 0, Nadera 0, Bayron 0, Gragasin 0, Cesar 0.

Quarters: 16-10, 32-26, 46-41, 65-57

Gatchalian in command

JOONEE Gatchalian of PTBA-Brunswick rolled a total of 2,890 pinfalls to top the grueling 12-game semifinal round and advance to the finals along with 23 others in the 2005 Boysen-TBAM Classic in Makati. Gatchalian averaged 240 pinfalls as he showed the way for JP Lao and Gene Tonolete, who finished with 2,868 and 2,854, respectively. Rounding out the top 24 were Bobot Pura, Kerwin Law, Jericho Jumapao, JC Tupaz, CJ Suarez, Frederick Ong, Gilbert Salazar, Markwin Tee, Ellen Ramos, Mike Robles, Yap Seok Kim, Tyrone Ongpauco, Irene Benitez, Amor Pardo, Kla Enriquez, Vener Reasonda, Benshir Layoso, Joseph Javellane, Mark Ho, Analily Lao and Biboy Rivera.

'Bulilit' tourney highlights INQUIRER Badminton Expo

A BULILIT tournament for kids 10 years and younger will be one of the highlights of the INQUIRER Badminton Expo Year 2: Everything in Badminton Under One Roof slated May 20-22 at the Megatrade Hall 2 of SM Megamall.

More than 40 companies with stakes in the booming sport of badminton are participating in the three-day exhibit co-presented by INQUIRER Badminton and Toby's Sports in cooperation with adidas.

The Bulilit tourney is a unisex doubles competition among teams carrying the colors of the Expo exhibitors.

Major sponsors of the Expo are Mizuno, Gosen, SM Megatrade Hall, Epson and Unilever. Minor sponsors are Victor, Chris Sports, Gerflor Taraflex, Sportshouse, Wilson, Prince and BCS Systems, with Wave 89.1 and Jam 88.3 as official radio stations.

Among the events lined up by Toby's is a clinic by national team coach Martin Araneta and a thorough fitness screening to be conducted by cardiologists and orthopedic doctors for early patrons.

For inquiries on the Expo, call Ching dela Cruz at 897-8808 loc. 259.

The other exhibitors are Revicon/Unilab, Puyat Vinyl, Atlas, Mondo, Alabang Racquet Club, Don Antonio Sports Center, The Zone, The Spa Badminton Center, Club 650, West Drive, Sureplay, Diagon Inc., Eurotrade, Teebox, Triso International, Kason, Badminton Shirts Unlimited, Smash Island, Lexber, Biotech Asia, Bloomingfields, Amway Phils., Cut Unlimited, Battledore and Shuttlecock, Bagtag by Picent, Powerade, Greenwich and Fila.

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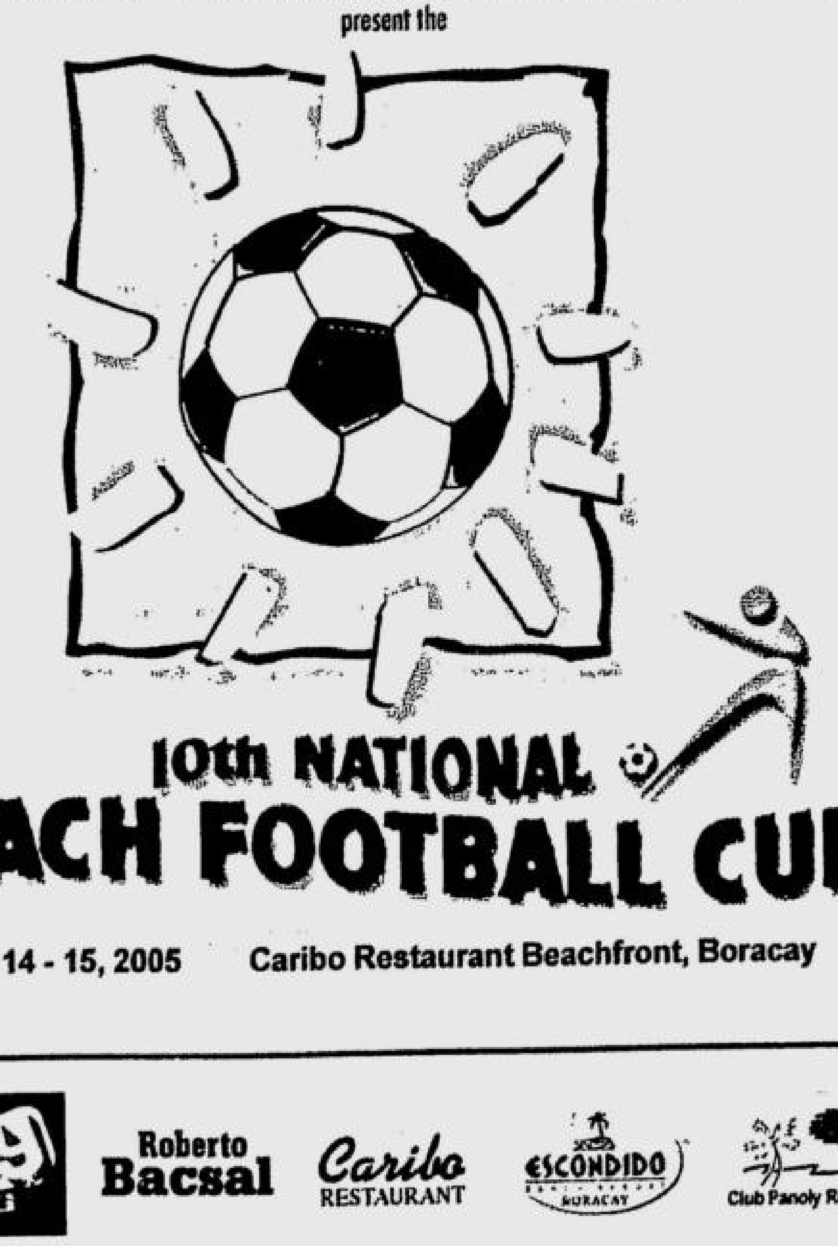

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2 XXX 2
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE INTERPRETER
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

4 SIX
10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:25 1:20 4:15 7:10 10:00

6 THE WEDDING DATE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

7 SAHARA
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

8 BOSO

9 THE PACIFIER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 GUESS WHO?
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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2 SAHARA

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7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE WEDDING DATE
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2 SIX
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3 THE INTERPRETER
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4 GUESS WHO?
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5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
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7 XXX 2
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8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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2 XXX 2
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3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:20

4 GUESS WHO?
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5 SIX
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6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:20 1:30 4:40 7:50

7 RESERVE

8 RESERVE

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2 RING OF NIBELUNGS
3 SIX
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GB1	GREENBELT 1	1 XXX 2 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30				
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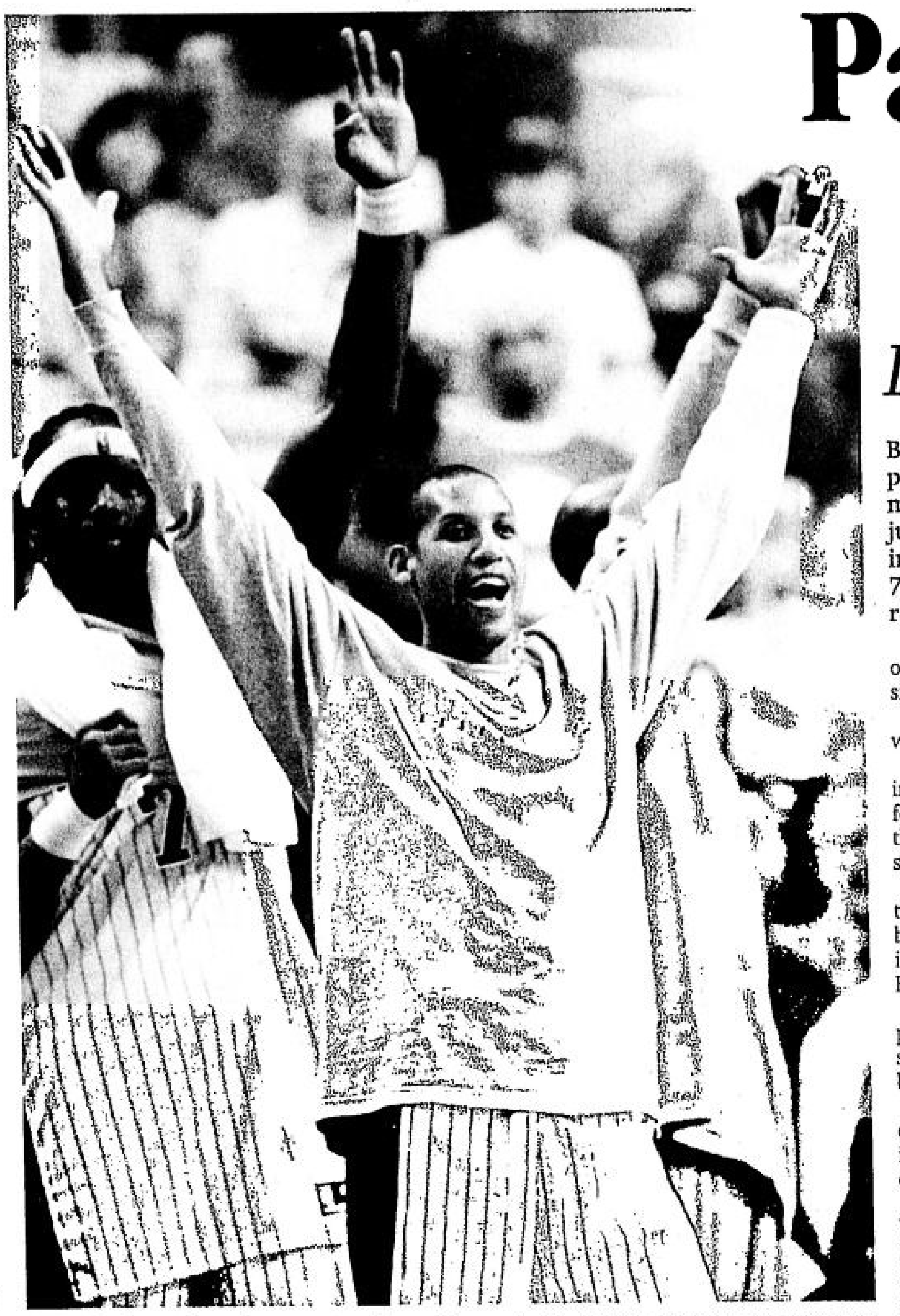
Pacers, Mavs grab 2nd round slots

Indiana sets up 'war' vs rival Detroit



AND SO the road to retirement stretches out longer for Reggie Miller (front), who celebrates Indiana's advance to the second round with teammate Jermaine O'Neal. REUTERS

BOSTON—The Indiana Pacers prolonged an NBA season marked by suspensions, injuries and disharmony by eliminating the Boston Celtics 97-70 in Game 7 of their first-round series on Saturday.

Stephen Jackson scored 24 points on eight-of-13 shooting to lead the sixth-seeded Pacers.

"This is exciting," Jackson said. "All I want is to win."

The Pacers now move on to a meeting with their biggest rivals—the defending champion Detroit Pistons—in the Eastern Conference semifinals starting on Monday.

It'll be a rematch between the teams that took part in one of the worst brawls in US sports history that spilled into the stands at The Palace in Auburn Hills last November.

"The brawl will have more of an impact on the fans and media," said Jackson. "I am over it. I am happy to just be back playing in Detroit."

The suspensions from that fight could have resulted in the Pacers giving up on their season, but that has clearly not been the case.

The Celtics played very poorly in a big game, missing easy shots and allowing Indiana to take uncontested ones, and had the second-lowest point total in their playoff history. They also lost three home games for the first time in a seven-game series.

NBA great Reggie Miller, who plans to end his 18-year career after this season, took just five shots and scored five points. But Miller didn't have to do much with Fred Jones adding 16 and Jermaine O'Neal, 15.

The Celtics were led by Antoine Walker with 20 points and Paul Pierce with 19, but both were out of the game with 4:20 left and Indiana ahead 86-62 as coach Doc Rivers began clearing his bench.

Indiana turned a close game into a rout midway through the third quarter with an 11-2 run that made the score 54-43 with 3:46 left.

In Dallas, Jason Terry sparked a huge first half to help add to Tracy McGrady's postseason frustration as the Mavericks rolled to a 116-76 demolition of the Rockets.

The fourth-seeded Mavericks became only the third team in NBA history to win a best-of-seven series after dropping the first two games at home. They open the quarter-finals against Steve Nash-led Phoenix on Monday.

"It feels good we are moving on," said Dirk Nowitzki. "It was a long series, we were down 2-0 but we grinded it out the tough way."

It is another early exit for McGrady, who has yet to make it out of the first round in eight seasons.

The star came out cold in the second Game 7 of his career, missing seven of his first eight shots as the Rockets fell behind from the outset and never recovered.

"I been bounced out the last four or five years, but I won't fold," McGrady said. "I am not going to hang my head."

McGrady showed his displeasure with 6:41 left in the second quarter after picking up a technical foul. Terry sank the free throw to give the Mavericks a commanding 49-25 lead.

"I am 25 years old and I got a lot of years left in me. This will just make me tougher."

Never able to find his rhythm, McGrady scored 27 points on just 10-of-26 shooting. *AP, AFP*

JERRY Stackhouse rushes into the arms of team owner Mark Cuban after Dallas eliminated Houston from the playoffs. REUTERS

I would have voted for Shaq, says MVP Nash

PHOENIX—The official announcement won't come until Sunday, but the word was out when the Phoenix Suns practiced on Saturday: Steve Nash has won the NBA's Most Valuable Player award.

The Suns' ever-energized point guard said the impending honor would be a recognition of the team's success and refreshing, unselfish style of play more than of his individual accomplishments.

"I definitely won this award because of my role on the team," Nash said. "I didn't win this because I overpower people or I'm dominating people with physical ability, whether it's jumping ability or strength or height."

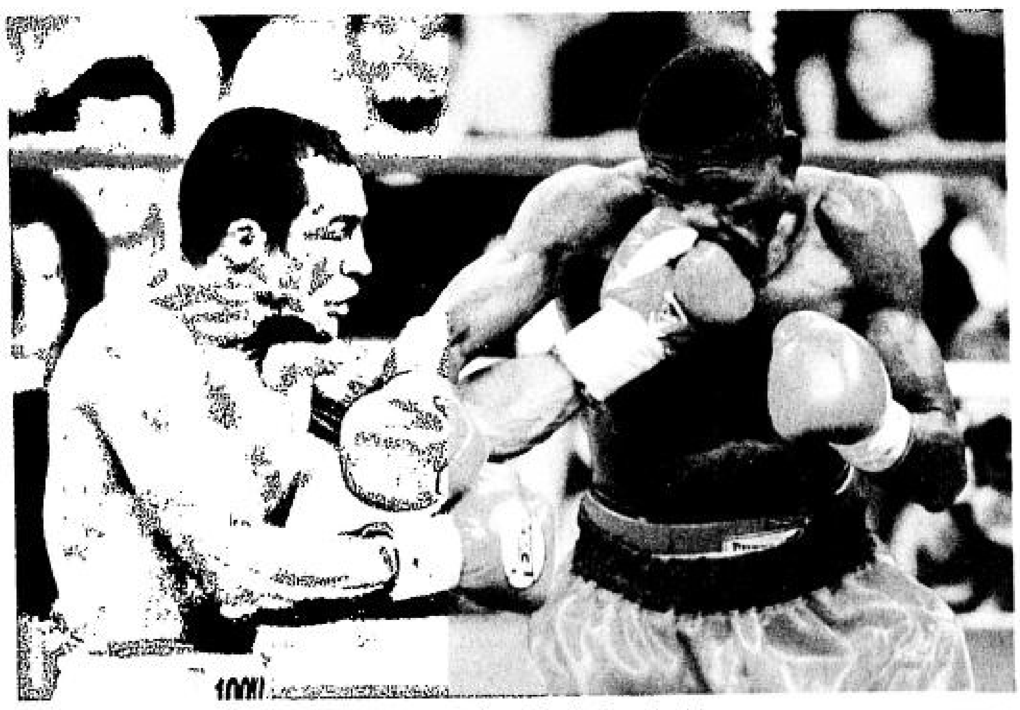
And as one would expect from someone accustomed to giving rather than receiving, Nash said he wouldn't have voted for himself.

"I would probably vote for Shaquille (O'Neal)," he said. "He's one of the greatest ever to play the game. I look up to him. He's a huge part of this game's history already. He's one of the very best personalities and players in the game's history."

The addition of Nash was the main reason the Suns went from 29 victories in 2003-04 to a league-best 62 this season. The new-look, up-tempo team averaged 110 points per game, the most in the NBA in a decade. It is, Nash has often said, the way the game is supposed to be played.

"To be considered in this setting, and the way the team plays, is really a testament to the game of basketball," Nash said of the award. "Our team couldn't come close to winning 60 games if we didn't share the ball,"

All five starters—Nash, Amare Stoudemire, Shawn Marion, Joe Johnson and Quentin Richardson—had 30-point games. Nash led the way with a career-best and NBA-leading 11.5 assists per game. *AP*



JUAN Manuel Marquez (left) tags Victor Polo with a left to the kisser. REUTERS

MARQUEZ WINS

Corrales rallies to KO foe after kissing canvas twice

LAS VEGAS—Diego Corrales, fighting desperately after being knocked down twice earlier in the round, rallied with a stunning flurry of punches to stop Jose Luis Castillo in the 10th round Saturday night in one of the most incredible comebacks in recent boxing history.

Corrales, half blinded and seemingly beaten, came back to mount a furious attack that left Mexico's Castillo defenseless on the ropes, taking punch after unanswered punch to the head.

Referree Tony Weeks finally jumped in to stop the bout at 2:06 of the round, giving Corrales the WBC lightweight title to go with the WBO crown he brought into the ring.

"I've waited for a long time to show my will and prove I'm a warrior," Corrales said. "I knew I was going to get up."

Corrales' left eye was closed and his right eye swollen when he was knocked down with a left hand early in the 10th round. He got up only to take two more lefts and go back down.

Corrales got off the canvas slowly, rising to his hands and knees and getting up at the count of nine, just barely beating the count. When Castillo, bleeding himself from a deep cut over his left eye, moved in to finish him off, Corrales landed a big left hook followed by a right hand that stunned the Mexican champion.

Summoning everything he had left, Corrales went after Castillo and pinned him on the ropes, landing big punches followed by two final left hooks that put an abrupt end to a fight that was expected to be good and more than lived up to the expectations.

"It was a war of attrition," Corrales (40-2) said.

"These two should never fight each other again," said Corrales' trainer, Joe Goosen. "It's too much."

In another title fight, Juan Manuel Marquez dominated perennial contender Victor Polo to retain his WBA and IBF featherweight titles.

Marquez dropped Polo in the seventh round with a right hand but was never able to stop him despite winning almost every round on the three ringside scorecards. Marquez won the unanimous decision by scores of 120-107, 119-108 and 118-109.

Marquez, who was dropped three times in the first round two fights ago before pulling out a draw with Manny Pacquiao, had no trouble against Polo, who made his fifth unsuccessful try for a title. *AP*

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KENTUCKY DERBY

Giacomo scores upset

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky—Giacomo defied the odds and won the Kentucky Derby in a gigantic upset by running down a game Afleet Alex in the final strides and generating a huge payoff on Saturday.

Even though trainer Nick Zito had five horses in the field of 20, including the favorite Bellamy Road, the Derby belonged to a 3-year-old colt who had won just once in seven races.

Giacomo, who always managed to stay in contention, finished fourth in the Santa Anita Derby, and trainer John Shirreffs was confident his colt would run well in the 1 1/4-mile (2-kilometer) Derby.

The horse, named for the rock star Sting's 9-year-old son, was ridden by Mike Smith, who, at long last, grabbed his first Derby victory in his 12th attempt. Smith was also aboard Holy Bull, Giacomo's sire, when he finished 12th in the 1994 Derby.

Bellamy Road never mounted a serious threat in the $2.4 million Derby, the richest ever run.

Closing Argument, another long shot, finished second with Afleet Alex third in the largest Derby field since 20 started in 1984.

The wild results produced the second-highest win payoff in Derby history. Giacomo returned $102.60 on a $2 win ticket. The Derby record is $184.90 by Donerail in 1913.

Giacomo, breaking from the No. 10 gate, was a little wide around the turn and started making up ground at the top of the stretch. Smith guided Giacomo outside and the colt took off, moving past Afleet Alex for the shocking victory by a half a length in 2:02.75.

GIACOMO, left, with jockey Mike Smith up, peels away from the rest of the field. AP

"It's awesome," Shirreffs said.

Smith agreed: "When I stood up at the wire, all the strength left my body and I was hanging on for dear life."

In the 1994 Derby, Holy Bull went off as the favorite, but never really had a chance. Who won? Zito, with Go for Gin.

"Giacomo redeemed his father's name," Smith said.

If Giacomo goes on to win the Preakness in two weeks, the stage would be set for a fourth straight Triple Crown try in the Belmont Stakes on June 11. War Emblem in 2002, Funny Cide, and Smarty Jones each won the Derby and Preakness, but came up short in the Belmont.

Owned by Rondor Music chair Jerry Moss, who also co-founded A&M records, Giacomo earned $1,639,600, boosting his bankroll to $1,866,316. Moss's friendship with Sting dates back to when The Police, his band, was involved with Moss's label. AP

Garcia has elite field biting dust

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Sergio Garcia left a world-class field in his wake by making eight birdies in his first 15 holes for a 5-under 67 that gave him a six-shot lead in the Wachovia Championship on Saturday.

Except for a few wayward tee shots into the trees, Garcia was nearly flawless from tee-to-green, and even better with his putter. He pulled away with three straight birdies along the back nine, and refused to let the brutal finishing holes stop him on his way to a 12-under 204.

D.J. Trahan, a 24-year-old rookie, did his best to challenge Garcia until stumbling on the back nine to a 71. He was at 6-under 210, along with Vijay Singh and Jim Furyk.

Furyk, in his best performance since wrist surgery a year ago, had a 69 and will be paired with the 25-year-old Spaniard on Sunday. He wasn't holding out much hope.

"He's lapping the field right now," Furyk said. "The golf tournament is in his hands; he's going to determine who the winner is. He goes out and shoots 70, you can hand him the trophy."

Singh played in the final group with Garcia on Saturday and was no match, shooting a 71.

Nick Price had a 69 and was at 211.

Tiger Woods, who has never finished worse than third after winning the Masters, might see that streak end with a thud. He squandered opportunities on the front nine and failed to make a birdie over the final 11 holes for a 73, leaving him at 1-under 215 and 11 shots behind.

Phil Mickelson had a 73 and was at 1-over 217.

It was only the third time Garcia has held a 54-hole lead on the US PGA Tour, although never one this big. The other two were at the 2001 Buick Classic and the Byron Nelson Championship last year, both times by two shots. He won both.

No one expects anything different this time.

The six-shot lead is the largest on the US PGA Tour since Mickelson led by seven in a wire-to-wire win at Pebble Beach. Garcia kept saying he was on top of his game from the opening round, and no one doubts him now.

He ran into trouble a couple of times in the trees that only slowed his momentum, but not for long.

Garcia pushed his drive into the trees on the fourth hole and had to play a low punch below a 6-foot ceiling of limbs. Seemingly out of danger, he then pitched too hard up the ridge and just off the green, and using his fairway metal to chip, sent the ball 12 feet by, leading to double bogey. AP

Nadal reaches Rome final

ROME—Rafael Nadal is showing signs of wavering. The Spanish teenager still has not fallen, however.

Nadal advanced to his third straight final with a 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 victory over countryman David Ferrer at the Rome Masters on Saturday.

Playing in Rome for the first time, Nadal extended his winning streak to 16 matches following his titles in Monte Carlo and Barcelona.

In a rematch of the Monte Carlo final, Nadal will meet French Open runner-up Guillermo Coria for the title Sunday. Coria beat Andre Agassi, 7-5, 7-6 (0), and improved to 13-2 on clay this season.

Nadal, who is a tour-best 30-2 on clay this year, also dropped the first set to Radek Stepanek in the quarterfinals Friday.

"I feel a bit tired mentally and physically," Nadal said. "I fight for every ball."

Coria, who lost to Nadal 6-3, 6-1, 0-6, 7-5 in Monte Carlo last month, isn't sure if the Spaniard's physical condition really matters.

"Maybe this is possible," Coria said. "But even when he's not very fit he runs a lot. He's still incredible. He's really eager to win and he wants to win every match. He's very confident because he has won a lot of matches."

"In Monte Carlo I was playing a final for the first time in a long time. Now it's going to be different," he said. AP

Sorenstam back in contention

WILLIAMSBURG, Virginia—With four birdies in a five-hole span, Annika Sorenstam rebounded from a rough start at the Michelob Ultra Open and got herself back into contention on Saturday for a record sixth straight tournament victory.

At 1-over with 36 holes to play on Sunday, she's seven shots behind leader Cristie Kerr.

Jennifer Rosales shot a 1-over 72 to stay at even par for the tournament, just six shots off pace. Dorothy Delasin was nine shots down after a 75 (145).

"I just needed a few birdies to get me going," said Sorenstam, whose 4-under 67 was low score of the day. "A few more would have been great to get on the leaderboard and tell them I'm still here."

Asked if she really thought the other players don't know she's lurking, Sorenstam smiled.

"I think they know I'm here," she said. "I just don't know how badly they know I'm here."

They'll soon find out. Kerr (68) topped the leaderboard at 6 under. Michele Redman (69) and AJ Eathorne (69) were two shots back, and Shi Hyun Ahn and Nicole Perrot were at 3 under.

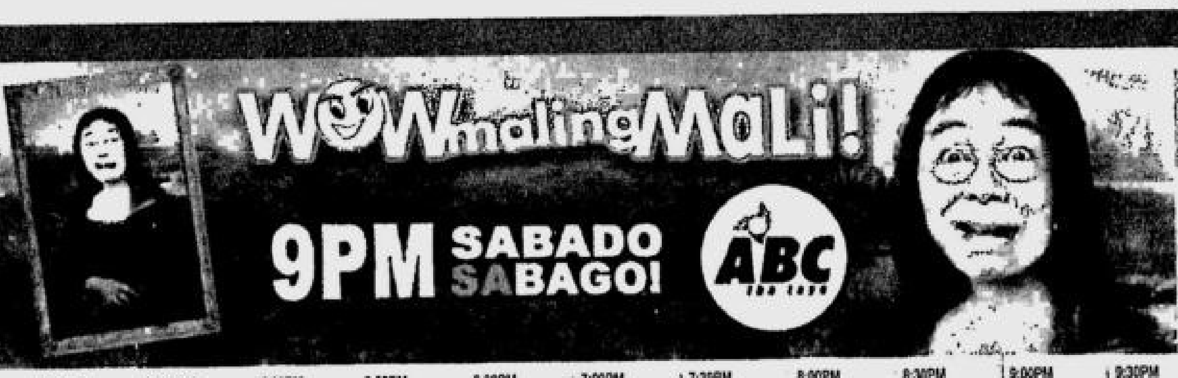
"I'm still optimistic," Sorenstam said.

She's come from behind in 19 of her 59 victories. Her rally from 10 strokes back on the final day of The Office Depot in 2001 tied the LPGA record for biggest comeback victory. AP

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Monday, May 9, 2005



WOWmalingMaLi!
9PM SABADO SABAGO!
ABC

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Spirits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	Anime Ring Kasho				Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice		Fear Factor		Big News	Pops!		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM) Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi		
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Sex & the City	Road Trip	
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		Asian X-Tour					IBC News Tonite	Linawin Natin	
JackTV		Wow		Stamball		Rated	Zeta Project	Cheaters	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Kid Notorious	Comedy Central Presents	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairy Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	OPM MYX Countdown		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C.		Queer eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight Weekend		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2	
Cinema One		Saan Nagtatago Ang Pag-ibig				'Til There Was You				Kung Ako Na Lang Sana				Ina ka Ng Anak Mo				Matanik Na Bading Mga Syokeng Buking	
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Super Gals	My MYX	Ragnarok	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Fightbox	Tru Calling		Charmed		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time
AXN		Lost		The Contender		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		The Contender		CSI: Miami (Season II)		CSI: Miami (Season II)	
Star World	Weird TV	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	The King Of Queens	Still Standing	Grounded For Life/ Yes Dear	Frasier	Boston Public		Friends	The King Of Queens
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary	Be The Creature		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials: Mission Battle Of The Arctic Giants		Built For The Kill/Into The Lost World		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary
Solar Sports		World Table Tennis C'ships QFinals								Sagupaan		NBA Jam L924	NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs First Round					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	E! True Hollywood Story		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Brini Maxwell Show	Modern Girl's Guide	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO	Lockdown (2:35 PM)			Deep Shock (4:15 PM)			Love Don't Cost A Thing				Subterano (7:25 PM)			Babe			A Nightmare On Elm Street		
Star Movies			Storm Catcher (3:45 PM)				Clifford			Holy Man (7:05 PM)				Target Of Opportunity			Death Becomes Her (10:35PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	2004 World Summit of Pool NY, NY USA		Spanish Football League 2004/05				Eng. Premier League Highlights 04/05		In The Driver's Seat	Sportscenter Asia	NBA Anthology Down Low Life in the D-League	2004 Sportvitational Table Tennis Championships	Pool/Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				Sportscenter Asia		
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax	Deconstructing Sarah (2:45 PM)			Warning: Parental Advisory (4:15 PM)			Undercover Lover (5:45 PM)				Poodle Springs (7:20 PM)			Alien Hunter			Tales From The Crypt Presents Bordello Of Blood		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Wife Swap		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Wife Swap					Just Cause (10:35PM)		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		American Chopper		Extreme Machines		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Civilisations	
Sports Plus																Wachovia C'ship Day-1		Dial M	
NBN	Value Vision				Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		The Working President	Concert at the Park				

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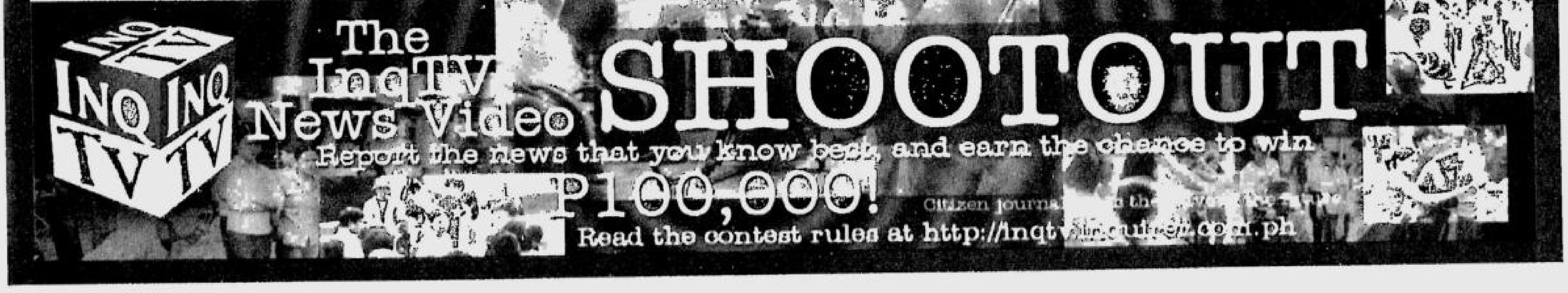

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ADVENTURE RACE

Pasaway's Strada shows way

THE COMPETING vehicles queue up in **Manila's Rizal Park, Kilometer Zero of the 2,000-km race.** MELO VILLAREAL, CONTRIBUTOR

By Jasmine W. Payo

BALER, QUEZON—Rains bathed the mountains of Aurora, but the slippery slopes hardly slowed early leader Pasaway Team in the Luzon leg of the Island Paradise Adventure Race here on Saturday night.

Driving a 4x4 Mitsubishi Strada, husband and wife Jess and Rowie Zamora and friend Nel Marcelino grabbed the top spot in the first pit stop after incurring just six demerits points.

"I actually had a hard time in the hat-weaving challenge (in San Luis, Aurora)," said Rowie after Team Pasaway finished the race stage in nine hours and 22 minutes.

The grueling nine-day auto rally organized by the Department of Tourism flagged off at the Rizal Park in Manila on Saturday.

Three teams incurred 11 demerits to share second place—veteran Formula car driver Mike Potenciano, John Gonzales and Bryan Gonzales of MP Turbo (9:28); national triathlon recordholder Nonoy Jopson, Joaquin Moras and Niño Abarquez of Edge (9:24); and Mark Espiritu, Gary Lemon and Jimmy Hembra of Toyota Hilux All Terrain (9:22.41).

"This race is based on a points system," explained Warner Andrada, DOT's chief of product design. "It's not about speed or whether who comes first. This is about precision driving."

In each leg, racers must drive to different destinations at a prescribed time and finish various physical and mental challenges along the way. Teams are assessed point deductions for any time delay or failure to complete a task correctly.

"Navigation was important," said the 31-year-old Jess Zamora. "We also had to make sure we arrive at the checkpoints on time, so we even calculated our speed and distance."

His wife Rowie said driving through the rough road for hours as well as the other physical tasks, like the caving challenge in the Biak na Bato National Shrine in San Miguel, Bulacan, didn't wear them down.

The Nomads, composed of Rovin Magnetico, Romeo and Alma Ballesteros, reached the pit stop first in 8:55.29, but tallied 12 merits to settle for third.

"Almost everyone in this race are good drivers," said Jess Zamora, who is into metal fabrication business. "We are actually the non-athletes."

Team Pasaway plans to maintain its strategy driving through Banaue, Ifugao, the next pit stop of the 2,000-km challenge.

MayniLA shoots for NCR sweep

TEAM MayniLA goes for a sweep of the NCR eliminations today when it tangles with Team Pampanga in the TM 9-Ball Champions League billiards tournament at the SM Megamall.

The Big City squad shoots for a fourth straight win and a place in the finals of NCR's first phase against Team Pampanga (1-2 win-loss) in the 1 p.m. match.

A loss by Team MayniLA coupled by a Team Makati win over Team Pangasinan will boot Ali Atienza's squad out of the finals race in the tiebreak since MayniLA trails Makati, 131-122.

The points system, which gives one point to the first eight balls with the yellow 9 counting for nine, will break all ties. Only the first four games of each team will count for the tiebreaker.

Meanwhile, Team Cavite (1-2) of Gov. Ayong Maliksi takes on Team Pasig (1-2) of Rep. Dodot Jaworski and Team Batangas (1-2) faces Team Parañaque (1-2) of Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana to complete the day's elimination matches of the event sponsored by Touch Mobile and supported by Brunswick, Accel and SM Supermalls.

Sphere leads Rifa football

SPHERE Football Club drew with U-Ha Girls Football Club, 2-2, over the weekend to top the standings after the first round of the 1st RIFA Girls 9-a-Side Summer Football Tournament.

Sphere, a squad made up of several members of the Under-19 national team, ended the round with three wins and a draw, just ahead of U-Ha.

Miriam College follows U-Ha in third place with Colegio de San Agustin/Hed Center and the Immaculate Concepcion Academy holding on to fourth and fifth spots.

Miriam head coach Bob Manlulo is the organizer and director of the unique tournament, an event for girls born in 1988 and younger.

SPORTSWATCH

Vigan's Eugenio advances

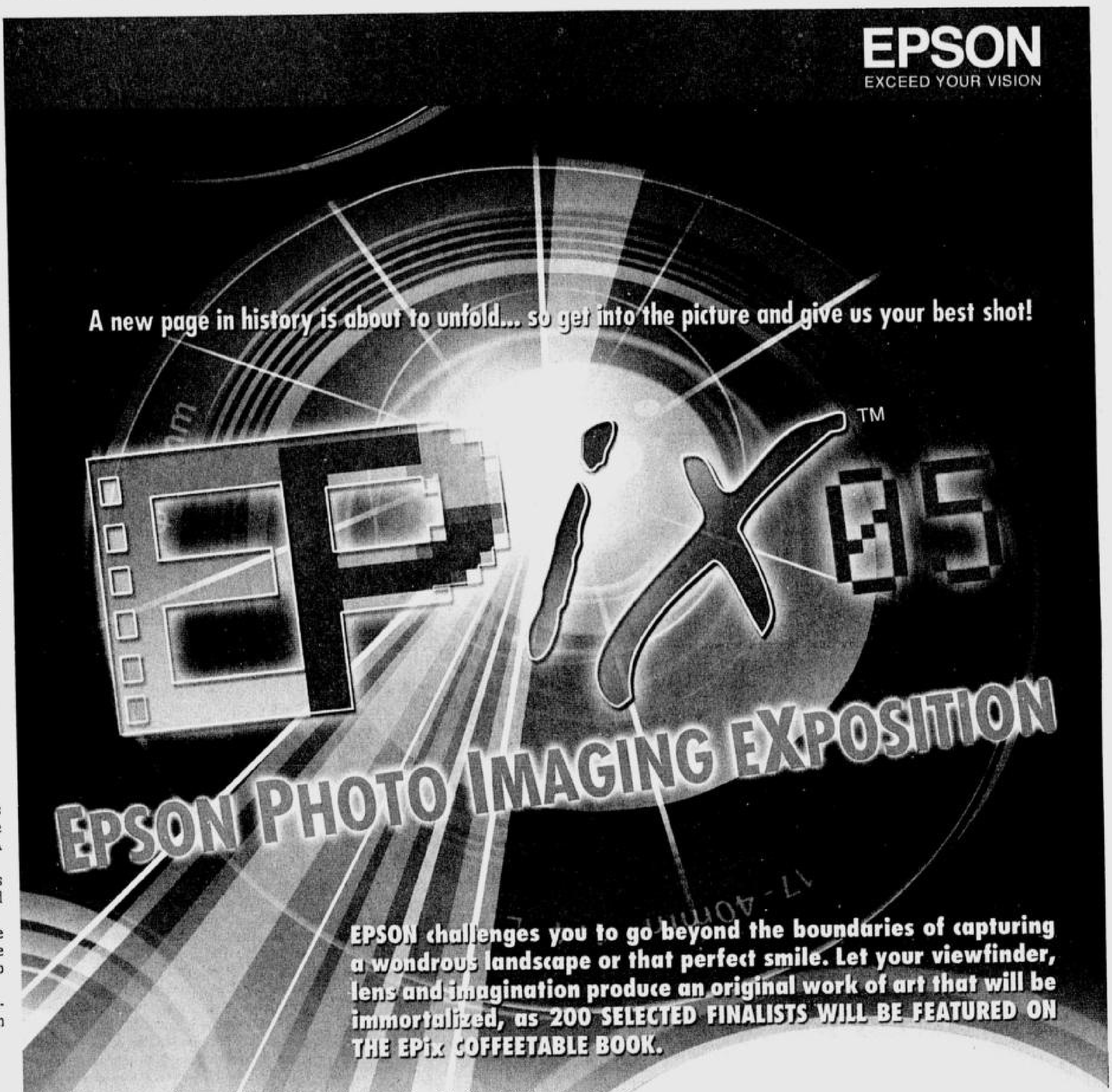
VIGAN—Local hope Martbart Eugenio ousted Stephen Chua, 6-3, 6-3, in the boys' 14-under division at the start yesterday of the 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Vigan Tennis Club. Also winning their opening-round day assignments were Reymond Padigos who routed Lendle Chua, 6-0, 6-0, in the boys' 16-under and Ericka Lagura who swept past Monique Rafael, 6-1, 6-0, in the girls' 12-under class. Favorite Ken Patrick Arevalo advance on a walkover win over Erwin Madre in the boys' 18-under division of the Milo tournament organized by CTW, supported by adidas and Vigan Mayor Ferdie Medina and sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association.

P1-M Pasay 5-cocker today

MEMBERS of the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) will go up against provincial cockfighting champions in the Barkadahan 5-cock Derby which kicks off at 6 p.m. today at the Pasay City Cockpit. On tap today in the event open to all cockers and breeders and sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Casino Filipino-Silahis hotel is 2-cock first-round eliminations. Entries will still be accepted for the second round on Wednesday, with the finals slated Friday. A guaranteed cash pot of P1 million is at stake for an entry fee of P8,800. For inquiries, call 843-1746, 843-1890 or 816-6750.

Antonio rules NCA derby

IN YET another superb performance, the PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin IV fighters of veteran cockfighter Patrick Antonio routed the rest of the 39-entry field to rule the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-cock Derby Thursday night at the Araneta Coliseum. PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin IV posted seven straight victories to win the event hosted by Roger Buenaflor, Efren Canlas, Tony Marfori and Pepito Ngo. With the championship, Antonio seized the lead in the NCA Cocker of the Year race. Antonio again used the deadly Sagupaan red roundheads trained and conditioned under the proven Sagupaan method. Antonio said he will field his Sagupaan red roundheads, which are at least 3 years old, in the 330K Big Event Part II 6-cock Derby on Saturday at the Las Piñas Coliseum.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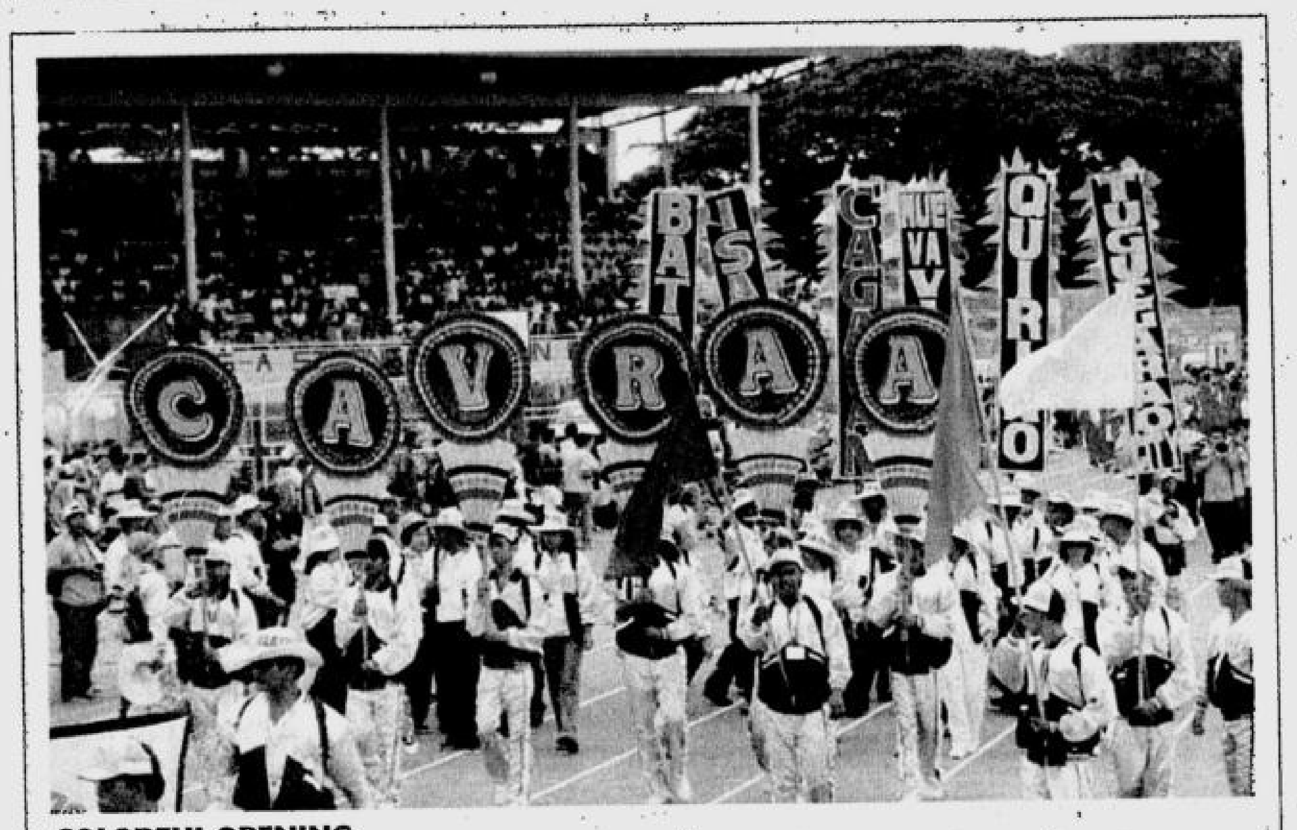
3rd Prize - Php 10,000

All 12 major winners will receive an Epson photo printer, and a copy of the EPix Coffeetable Book, with the introduction from the award-winning art critic Mr. Cid Reyes.

Deadline for submission of all entries is on August 12, 2005.

Download entry forms, rules and regulations and submission mechanics at www.epson-epix.com or you can visit the Epson Showrooms at Cyberzone, SM Megamall and SM City North Edsa, Katha Digital Imaging Gallery at Digital Exchange, Glorietta 4 or drop by OneWorkshop, Inc. Units 216-217 La Fuerza Plaza II, Don Chino Roces Ave. Makati City, Tel 8105094, email one_workshop@yahoo.com.

SPORTS



COLORFUL OPENING
Participants from Region I parade in a medley of colors during the opening ceremonies of the Palarong Pambansa yesterday at the Iloilo Sports Complex in Iloilo City.
JESS YUSON

Hot Cover Girl overpowers Empire King

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

EMPIRE King made a big gamble stalking Don Paolo and paid dearly for it as Cover Girl came charging hard down the stretch to capture the 2005 First Gentleman Silver Cup race on yesterday at the Santa Ana Park.

Cover Girl finished the arduous 2,050-meter contest disputed on a hot Mother's Day afternoon a length in front of Empire King, who lost steam chasing the fast-stepping Don Paolo from the outset.

"*Iyan ang gusto niya. Galing sa likod at malakas na reremate. Buti nakayanan ang init* (That's what she likes. Coming from behind and rallying hard. It's good he bucked the heat)," said star jockey Jonathan Hernandez, sweating profusely after dismounting the 4-year-old bay filly.

The victory, worth P1.1 million for the C&H Enterprises, was reminiscent of Cover Girl's brilliant win in the recent Commissioner's Cup where she also came from behind to thwart Empire King.

"*Araw nila ngayon. Maganda naman ang itinakbo niya, 'di lang sinuwerte* (Today's their day. He ran a good race but luck wasn't on our side)," said Jeffrey Ladiana, Empire King's regular pilot.

Empire King, hoping to beat Cover Girl anew as in their last meeting in the GMA Cup, settled for P350,000. West Bound, the coupled bet of Cover Girl, wound up third, three lengths off the victor, then came Don Paolo, Free Wind and Paramount.

Ladiana knew that allowing Don Paolo to set a pace to his own liking would spell danger, so he muscled Empire King right behind the Don Juan Derby champion, while Hernandez gave Cover Girl the rail to save precious ground at fifth.

Empire King found it tough to pass the Pat Dilema-driven Don Paolo at the far turn and succeeded only in seizing the lead as they neared the final turn. By that time, Cover Girl was already breathing down their necks.

Ladiana desperately whipped the 2004 Horse of the Year but Cover Girl simply swooped past them on the outside. Sensing victory was theirs, Hernandez had all the luxury to look back at their beaten arch rival.

Sired by Khozaam out of Gallant Native, Cover Girl timed a tepid 2:14 flat (28.5-24-25.5-25.5-30.5), way off her personal best of 2:11.

Bettors sent Empire King away as the first choice with P607,309 in sales, while Cover Girl and West Bound attracted a combined P518,937 out of P1,355,529.

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Fajardo slams ex-sec gen

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I SAY the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines is lucky for having in its fold officials with hearts of gold, as well as world-ranked players who could very well boost our chances to win honors in this year's Southeast Asian Games. But I am bothered to know that there are some quarters who are sowing turmoil in the association, virtually disrupting its smooth preparation for the biennial meet. What's with these people?

If they truly love their country, these people should stop creating havoc on the association at this time when the BSCP is currently implementing its comprehensive program for the selection and training of national players for the SEA Games. And they should also stop discrediting our national players, led by former world champion Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and reigning world champ Alex Pagulayan, by spreading the ugly rumor that these players only compete in tournaments where big money is at stake. This is farthest from the truth.

By agreeing to play in the SEA Games set here in late November and early December this year, Reyes and Co. will miss tournaments, specifically in the United States, where cash prizes worth a fortune will be up for grabs. To set the record straight, they are playing for the Philippines in the SEA Games to win the gold medals and not to get that pot of gold in the US.

There is no doubt that Reyes is the game's biggest name. In the recent third leg of the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour, Reyes was gifted by host Kaohsiung City Mayor Chen Chi-mai with a special souvenir item, attesting once more to Reyes' lofty standing in international billiards.

On the billiards leadership issue, BSCP president Ernesto Fajardo has reacted to a protest filed before the Philippine Olympic Committee by his former secretary general, Joaquin Perez de Tagle.

In his letter to POC arbitration commission chair Robert Aventajado, Fajardo said: "The protest lodged by Mr. De Tagle against me which is the basis for the arbitration proceeding is, in my humble view, self-serving and without merit."

De Tagle had claimed in his letter to POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco that there was a need for the POC to push his case for arbitration because the last BSCP election (March 18, 2005) and its results were invalid and had no binding effect because the Securities and Exchange Commission had revoked the corporate license and registration of BSAI (Billiards and Snooker Association, Inc.) in Sept. 20, 2003.

De Tagle also claimed that Fajardo had effectively resigned as president of BSCP on March 1999 and that he had no authority to call for a meeting of the members of the BSAI for the election of trustees of the association.

In his reply, Fajardo disputed De Tagle's claim that the last BSCP election and results were invalid, stressing that De Tagle himself called for elections as late as Feb. 18, 2005. "If he (De Tagle) believed that an election was invalid, why did he schedule one?"

Fajardo said the order of revocation, dated Aug. 20, 2003, of the certificate of registration of BSAI was set aside last April 26, which meant that it was no longer an issue here.

On his resignation as BSCP president, Fajardo said he did resign in March 1999 but he was prevailed upon by the other members of the board to reconsider. "And so I agreed to return." The POC was duly informed of this development through a letter sent by then BSCP chair Arturo "Bong" Ilagan Jr. on Nov. 22, 2000. "Since that time up to the present I have been the recognized president of the BSCP by the POC, Philippine Sports Commission and various international billiards federations."

Fajardo also said: "We accept the POC's authority to act as final arbiter of all intra-NSA conflicts and disputes in case the same cannot be settled within the NSA's processes and procedures. The BSCP strictly followed all processes and procedures in the conduct of the last elections and that made sure that all our actions were within the law."

The soft-spoken billiards president also told Aventajado that Game Ball at the Medicine Building of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, which is supposed to be the training venue of our national team, cannot be used because De Tagle has turned it into a personal business venture and has left it in a sorry state of disrepair. "As a result," Fajardo said, "our players are using the facilities offered by newly elected BSCP director and billiards godfather Aristeo Puyat and new member Sebastian Chua, owner of Star Paper and Star Billiards Hall. We also understand Mr. De Tagle is in arrears with the PSC where he had unliquidated cash advances totaling P499,132.35."

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PASAWAY	Demerits: 8
SIDEWAYS	Demerits: 8
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HABAGAT SHELL	Demerits: 7
TOYOTA HILUX ALL TERRAIN	Demerits: 7
EDGE	Demerits: 6
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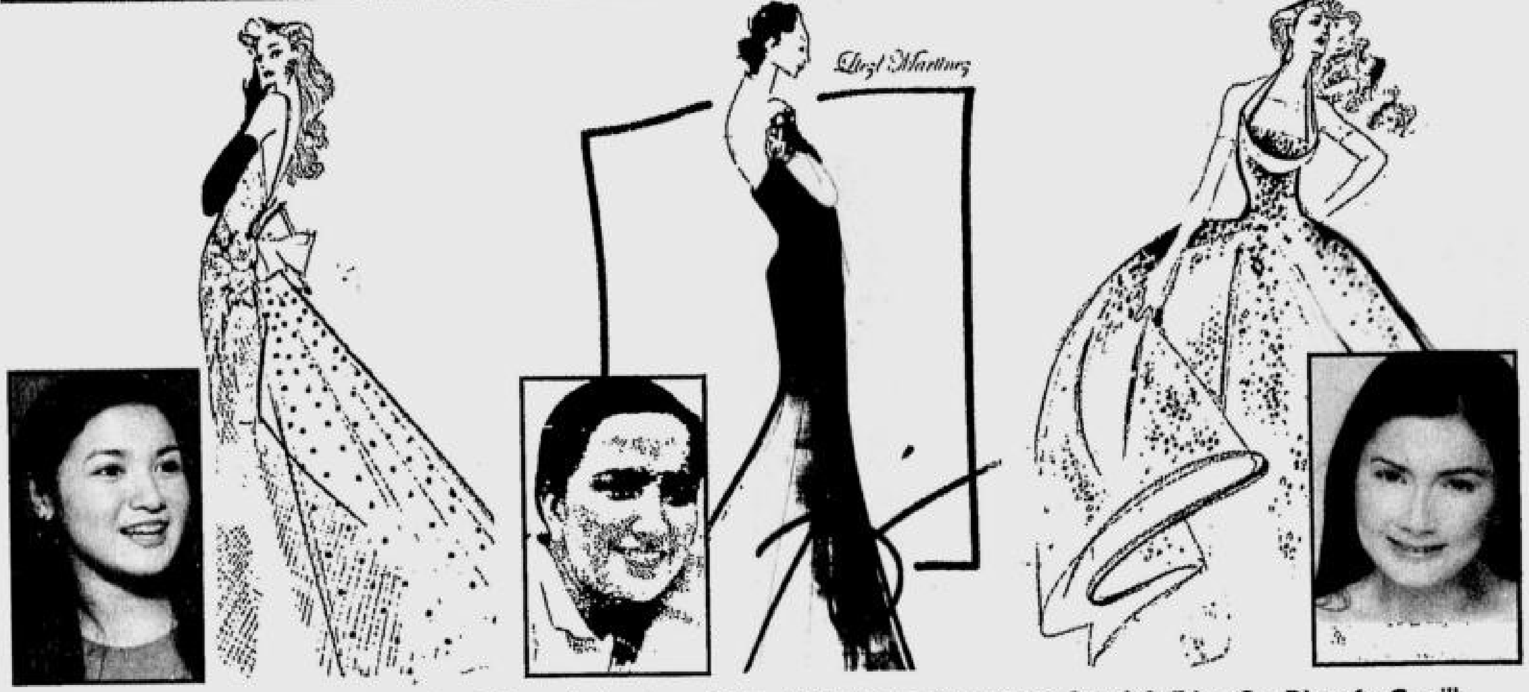

STARS will be dressed up by their favorite designers in keeping with the 1950s theme, for instance, from left, Edgar San Diego for Camille Prats, Rajo Laurel for Liezl Martinez and Marden Iglesias for Dina Bonnevie.

Countdown to the Lunas

Film Academy of the Philippines pulls out all the stops for 23rd peer awards

FOR THE local Oscars, the countdown begins.

If France has the César and Spain the Goya, the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP) has christened its annual awards for cinematic excellence the Luna.

"Coincidentally, the original FAP trophy, which depicted a woman with her arms raised, was based on a painting by world-renowned Filipino artist Juan Luna," explained FAP director general Leo Martinez.

The new name was an entry sent by Baltazar de la Cruz and Romeo Cando, who topped FAP's online name-the-trophy contest and won P5,000 each.

Now on its 23rd year, the FAP promises to pull out all the stops in the name of Red Carpet glamour for the May 14 event.

Theme party

A hundred stars are expected at the Harbour Garden Tent of the Westin Philippine Plaza tent. The screen idols will be dressed by topnotch designers in keeping with the night's 1950s-1960s theme—ladies in glittery gowns, gentlemen in tuxes and barongs.

Bulgari, Jewelmer and Fe Panlilio will provide gems and accessories.

The '50s and '60s are considered the Golden Age of Philippine cinema. FAP officials said they meant to recreate the "genteel era of ball gowns and big band music."

Red Carpet rolls at 2 p.m. Stars will be brought to the venue in chauffeured luxury cars provided by BMW Philippines. The Red Carpet segment will be hosted by Boy Abunda and aired live over RPN 9.

Just like in Hollywood, the stars will be interviewed and photographed by accredited press people in a special cordoned area.

At 5 p.m. the awards show proper begins, featuring some of the country's leading performers, led by Martin Nievera as host. Aside from the usual citations, two new prestigious awards are being added to this year's honor roll—Best Movie Trailer and Best Movie Poster.

(The awards rites will go on delayed telecast from 9 p.m. to 12 midnight, also on RPN 9.)

The big winners will later be ushered to the media room, where Melanie Marquez will conduct an impromptu "post-awards" interview *a la* Joan Rivers.

Capping the evening is a dazzling fireworks display.

Just like the Oscars' Governor's Ball, the FAP Awards will have a Director General's Ball, at the Westin's Grand Ballroom.

The Director General's Ball is a sit-down, invitation-only formal dinner. Westin chef Brian Farrell will whip up a special menu. Moet Chandon will keep the bubbly and spirits flowing. Florist/stylist Robert Blancaflor will evoke a '50s ambience in his design and décor.

Youthful edge

Prizes will be given to the Best '50s- and '60s-Inspired Gowns. Fun awards will include Funniest Kiss and Wackiest Hairstyle. The ball will likewise be covered by RPN 9, and aired on May 21, from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Giving the FAP Awards a youthful edge is the Addict Mobile After-Party bash to be hosted by the cell phone company's endorsers—Brent Javier, Borgy Manotoc, Rossanne Prieto, Tim Yap and Bianca Araneta. DJ John and DJ Manolet Dario will spin music till dawn, according to organizers.

Martinez reiterated the academy's goal to foster "effective and harmonious relationships among the different guilds, thereby encouraging and promoting the growth and development of the entire film industry."

Bayani San Diego Jr.

Unilever: We're not guardians of morality

"WE NEVER claimed to be a paragon of morals, nor are we the guardians of morality."

Thus, Unilever Philippines, one of the country's biggest makers of consumer goods—including Sunsilk, Surf, Cream Silk and Knorr products—clarified its position in the ad pullout campaign against TV talk shows that have aired sex videos.

The clarification was contained in a letter addressed to the INQUIRER and dated May 3, signed by Chito S. Macapagal, general manager for corporate development.

It was a reaction to statements made by country communications manager Ed Sunico and quoted in an INQUIRER story ("Coke, Jollibee, Greenwich pull out of 2 Talk

UNILEVER/ A2-2

Claudine says BIR has nothing on her

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

MOVIE and TV star Claudine Barretto thinks it's unfair for the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to zero in on show biz personalities in its drive against tax evasion.

First there was actor Richard Gomez, and then singer Regine Velasquez. The latest is Douglas Quijano, manager of Gomez, as well as Joey Marquez, Jomari Yllana and Gelli de Belen.

A total of 218 more show biz personalities are said to be under the BIR's tight watch.

Claudine, 25, told a small group of entertainment writers on Thursday that she was confident she's not on the list. She pointed out: "In 2003, I was the number one taxpayer [in show biz]. I paid more taxes than my bosses [at ABS-CBN]. My accountant and I are honest."

"I WAS 2003's top Taxpayer in show biz."

What's P25 million?

The press people had visited the set of the upcoming ABS-CBN soap, "Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin." Claudine, star of the soap, was also asked about the grand wedding that she and fiance Raymart Santiago, 31, were planning for January next year. The rumored budget for the event is enough to send taxmen running after her.

"*Paano kami hahabulin, eh, wala pa kaming nilalabas na pera,*" Claudine protested. "And contrary to rumors, we're not spending [as much as] P25 million for the wedding. That's so wrong."

What she confirmed was, she and Raymart had granted her mother studio the exclusive rights for the wedding coverage, even if Raymart is a mainstay of GMA 7's "Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita."

Clautine recounted: "I told him, 'Babe, *ikaw na ang bahala. Basta, ito ang* proposal *ng* ABS.' He said, 'Babe, it's your day.' We went for ABS." She declined to give figures.

The couple won't be signing any pre-nuptial agreement, said Claudine. "We don't believe in that. We even have joint [bank] accounts."

Mrs. Santiago

Although Claudine is a major ABS-CBN artist—having starred in the top-rated TV series "Marina" and in Star Cinema's blockbuster movie, "Milan"—she said Raymart earns more from his sitcom.

"He spoils me," she said. "When I was in Dubai recently (for the movie of the same title) and ran out of dollars, I called up and asked him to send me some. He did."

She has been using her soon-to-be married name, like a rehearsal, she said. "I use Mrs. Santiago when I call for pizza delivery. And I enjoy scribbling it."

Claudine and Raymart have the same birthday: July 20. They met years ago through her sisters Gretchen and Marjorie who were friends of his brothers Randy and Rowell. She said Raymart helped her weather the crisis brought about by the death of her former boyfriend, Rico Yan, in 2002.

Speaking of Gretchen, Claudine said she hadn't spoken to her elder sister following a falling out that also involved Marjorie. "I don't want to say whether or not she's invited to the wedding," said the youngest of the sis-

CLAUDINE/ A2-2

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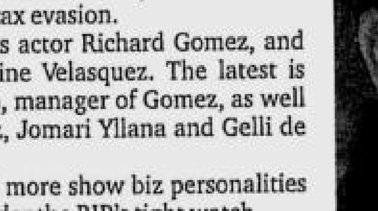

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- The Wedding Date Special Advance Screening MAY 09 (Monday) Robinsons Movieworld BACOLOD MAY 10 (Tuesday) Robinsons Movieworld ILOILO
- Judging of Photo Contest - Cinema Lobby • 7:00 PM
- Special Advance Screening - Cinema 1 • 7:30 PM

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ADGROUP EVENTS Advertising and Promotions
Media partners: The Guardian • The News Today • Sunstar Iloilo • Visayan Daily Star • Stuff Southern Lifestyle Magazine

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

The Gateway Pavilion

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway Cineplex*10
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GUESS WHO
12:40 / 3:00 / 5:20 / 7:40 / 10:00
XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
CAN THIS BE LOVE
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
FINDING NEVERLAND
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
THE INTERPRETER
12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
1:00 / 3:20 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 7:00 / 9:20 / 10:00
THE WEDDING DATE
1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
THE PACIFIER
1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
SAHARA
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
Pre-Opening Screenings - KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 11:20 / 2:20 / 5:20 / 8:20
❷ CAN THIS BE LOVE 11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
❸ XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION 11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
❹ SIX 11:50 / 2:05 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:50
❺ TAGOS SA LAMAN 11:55 / 2:00 / 4:05 / 6:10 / 8:15
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 11
4:45pm Alaska vs. Red Bull / 7:35pm Talk N Text vs Purefoods
THE 'C' SHOW
May 21, Saturday, 8pm
KEVYN LETTAU: MEMORIES OF LOVE
May 14, Saturday, 8pm
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26, Thursday, 8pm

CENTER EVENTS

EXHIBITS	***The Saturday Group Art Exhibit** featuring the works of the premier artists' group in the country including Mauro "Malang" Santos until May 15 at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall*
NEW STORES	***Fully Booked** (Level 2), **Time Zone** (Level 3), **Cello** (Ground Floor) & and **Kashieca** (Level 3); all at Gateway Mall*
PERFORMANCES	***Guarana, Acoustic Jive, Arthur Manuntag / Romy Posadas & Friends** are set to perform on May 13, 14 & 15 respectively at The Gateway Pavilion.*

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

Unilever . . .

From page A2-1

Shows," May 1) on an ad boycott campaign initiated by show biz sectors and supported by some advertisers' groups.

"Unilever believes that to succeed requires the highest standard of corporate behavior toward our employees, consumers, and the society that we live in," Macapagal wrote.

Sunico earlier said the company's decision to place ads depended on viewership. "Talk shows are controversial, which is what the viewers are after," Sunico said. "Content is the responsibility of the MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board)."

Difficult

Macapagal complained that Sunico's statements had been taken out of context. He pointed out: "What the article failed to mention [but which] was emphasized during the phone interview with our country communications manager [was] that [ad placements on] these shows [did] not necessarily indicate that Unilever supported 100 percent the programs' content. It is obviously very difficult for us to monitor [all the] contents of [all] the programs as they are being aired, since we have ads on a lot of programs."

The INQUIRER reported ad pullouts from the very popular "S-Files" (Saturday, GMA 7) and "The Buzz" (Sunday, ABS-CBN). Since the shows aired sex videos, protests have been launched and written about.

McCann Erickson Philippines, the country's largest advertising agency, called upon its clients to temporarily withdraw ads from said shows.

Macapagal said: "While we respect the decision of other advertisers... Unilever would like to approach this matter differently. We prefer to dialogue with the producers... If nothing positive comes out of it, [then] can we say we should consider withdrawing our ads. We also take into consideration what the advertising associations have to say, Unilever being an active member of the AdBoard and Pana (Philippine Association of National Advertisers) for several years now."

Concerned

Pana and the AdBoard have also announced they would first go the dialogue route.

Macapagal's letter concluded: "Unilever prides itself on being a responsible company, as evidenced by our efforts and campaigns for the environment, health and nutrition. This responsibility is extended to the promotion of positive values particularly in brand advertising... Needless to say, we are concerned about this issue [and] look forward to [its] effective resolution."

Claudine says . . .

From page A2-1

ters. There's so much speculation and it hurts me when I hear or read that she's not invited. I'd want her to be there. If that's not possible, then maybe even just Dominique (Gretchen's daughter with partner Tony Boy Cojuangco)."

Claudine and Raymart have also adopted a baby girl whom they've named Sabina. Yesterday was Claudine's first Mother's Day with Sabina. She said the Barrettos and Santiagos were set to have lunch or dinner together."

"Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin" premieres later this month. The actress said she was planning to wrap up work by November, and spend all of December preparing for her altar date. "*Ayoko naman na mag*-taping the day before my wedding," she said.

In the series, Claudine plays a poor but optimistic character in search of a long-lost sister. Also in the cast are Diether Ocampo, John Lloyd Cruz, Angelika de la Cruz and Jaclyn Jose.

Hanopol home for Juan de la Cruz reunion

MIKE Hanopol, one-third of the Pinoy rock band Juan de la Cruz, is back home to be with Joey "Pepe" Smith and Wally Gonzales for a reunion concert on June 11 at the World Trade Center.

Mike has just returned from the United States after a successful concert tour and is eager to get started with rehearsals for the reunion titled "Juan de la Cruz: Ang Pagkalas."

MIKE Hanopol PHOTO: ROGER MARGALLO

SHOW TIME

Tonight

Side A at Hyatt Regency's Calesa Bar. Call 833-1234

Rivermaya at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Freestyle at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Tomorrow

Behind Closed Doors at Funnside, Timog Ave., QC; 8 p.m.

Ladine Roxas at Merk's

Emm Gryner at Saguijo Bar in Makati

M.Y.M.P. at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

May 11

Wednesday Jazz Festival with Lynn Sherman at Merk's

Paolo Santos at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Emm Gryner at Music One in Greenbelt 3, Makati

May 12

Aubrey Miles, Francine Prieto, Jeni Hernandez, Sheree and Belinda Bright at "Metal Dreams: FHM 100 Sexiest Women in the World Victory Party" at the NBC Tent, The Fort; 8 p.m.

Route 70 at Funnside, Timog, QC; 8 p.m.

Bridge at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Acoustic Jive at Merk's

Wiseguys at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

May 13

Sex Bomb Singers and Ya Chang at Klownz in Angeles, Pampanga. Call (045) 892-6538.

Spirit of '67 at Starmall Edsa, 4 p.m.

Emm Gryner at Village Courtyard in Cebu

Fat Session at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

May 13 and 14

Ella May Saison is back in "Soulful, the Concert" at the Music Museum. Nina, Akafellas and Jimmy Bondoc are guest performers. Call 891-9999.

Lite Switch at Taste Buds, Robinson's Place Manila; 7 p.m.

APRIL Tatlongbayan

May 13 and 15

Alvin Barcelona, a Catholic lay preacher and singer-songwriter, in his first major concert, "Believe," at the Party Central, Mother Ignacia Avenue. Call 722-9562

May 14

RJ Guitar Festival: The Concert at the Antel Entertainment Complex, Makati Ave. Corner Gen. Luna St. Performers include Nyoy Volante, Aiza Seguerra, Noel Cabangon, Paolo Santos, Florante, Pido, Rene Garcia of the Hotdog, The Dawn, Rage Band, Jun Lopito and Joey Puyat.

Jose Manalo, Wally B, Teri Onor, Ruby Rodriguez and Jimmy Santos at Klownz in Angeles, Pampanga. Call (045) 892-6538.

Escape at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Emm Gryner at Club North in Bacolod City

Razorback at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 4343597

Parokya ni Edgar, Kitchie Nadal and Urbandub at the SM City Cebu Parking Lot for MTV Hits Cebu Band Competition. For details, call (02) 889-9251 in Manila or (032) 234-0048 in Cebu.

Jed Madela in "Songs Rediscovered Live" at Plaza Beatriz Hotel in Ozamiz City

"Spettacolo Pirotecnico," light and fireworks show at Enchanted Kingdom, 9 p.m.

May 15

Phase Cuts Band at Metropolis Star Alabang, 4 p.m.

Kevyn Lettau at Fuzion Smoothie Café at The Podium

"StarStruck Superstar" concert series featuring Mark Herras at Enchanted Kingdom, 7 p.m.

Emm Gryner at Juice in Boracay

April Tatlongbayan in Norwalk, Connecticut, USA

May 16

Side A at Hyatt Regency's Calesa Bar. Call 833-1234

"Para Sa 'Yo Willy" fund-raising show for Willy Cruz at Merk's. Guests include Rico J. Puno, Vernie Varga, Jessa Zaragosa, Ricky Davao, Hajji Alejandro, Noel Cabangon, Noel Trinidad, Dulce, Marco Sison, Dingdong Avanzado, Leo Martinez, Rey Valera, Nonoy Zuñiga and Nanette Inventor. Call 757-4720

ROUTE 70

May 17

M.Y.M.P. at Tavern on the Square

Kearny Street at Funnside, Timog Ave., QC; 8 p.m.

May 18

Pido at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Wednesday Jazz Festival with Sandra Lim at Merk's

May 19

Phase Cuts Band at Starmall, Las Piñas, 4 p.m.

Luke Mejares, Keith Martin and Aretha and the Souled Out Band at Merk's

Cynthia Alexander at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Circus Band 2004 Editionat Funnside, Timog Ave., QC; 8 p.m.

Wiseguys at Tavern on the Square

May 20

Gary V in Laoag, Ilocos Norte

Jed Madela at the Megastrip

Route 70 at Merk's

April Tatlongbayan at Holiday Inn Newark, New Jersey, USA

Old School at Taste Buds, Robinson's Place Manila

Fat Session at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

May 21

Tropical Depression at '70s Bistro, Anonas St., QC. Call 434-3597

Paolo Bediones at the Araneta Coliseum for Carter's underwear fashion event, "The 'C' Show."

Freestyle with Escape at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Aretha and the Souled Out Band at Merk's

RJ Jacinto

Siguradong tuloy ang party ni Junior kahit nasa Saudi pa si Senior.
METROBANK
SUPERBILIS PADALA

Bakit ka pa susubok ng ibang remittance service? Dito na kayo sa eksperto – ang Metrobank Superbilis Padala!

SUPER BILIS! Ang remittance mo ay pwedeng ma-credit sa iyong account sa loob ng 24 hours. At malalaman mo via text kung na-credit na ang pera.

SUPER SAFE! Dahil electronic transfer, siguradong di mawawala o mahaharang ang pera.

SUPER DALI! Walang kahassle-hassle. Di na kailangang pumunta sa bangko at magpakita ng maraming ID pag account holder ka. Mag-withdraw lang sa alinmang Metrobank o BancNet ATM anytime. Kung wala ka namang Metrobank account, pwedeng door-to-door delivery o i-claim over-the-counter dala ang 2 valid IDs.

SUPER SIGURADO! Dahil pinagsama nito ang lakas ng dalawang bangko. Ang Al Rajhi ay isa sa pinakamalaki at matatag na bangko sa Saudi. May higit sa 400 branches kung saan kayo pwedeng magpa-Superbilis Padala. Ang Metrobank, kilala nang maaasahan. Di kayo kakabahan.

Ipagsabi na sa lahat ng kabayan sa Saudi!
O di kaya'y magpunta sa pinakamalapit na Metrobank branch!

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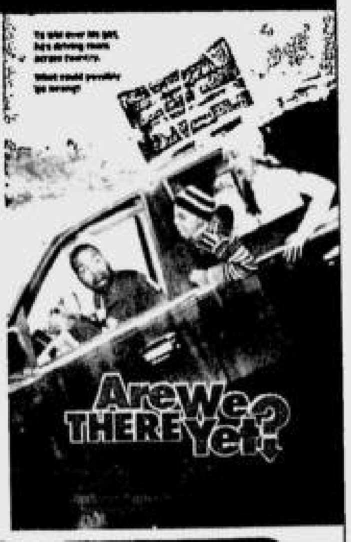
Step on the gas for a road trip you'll never forget in...

Are We There Yet?

Watch it on May 11, 2005
Exclusively at SM North Edsa

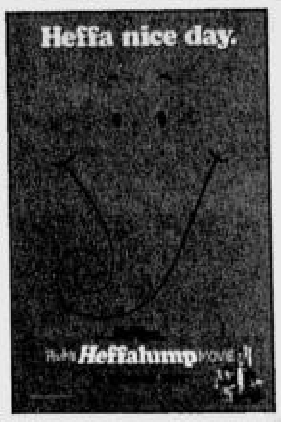

Are We There Yet?

MTRCB RATING: G (ALL AGES ADMITTED)

FOR INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING, SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

CALLUS@ 833-9999

VISITUS@ www.smcinema.co



WINNIE THE POOH AND THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD GANG ARE TOGETHER AGAIN IN
POOH'S HEFFALUMP MOVIE!

CATCH THIS CHARMING NEW ADVENTURE TODAY **EXCLUSIVELY** AT **SM MEGAMALL**

GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium cinema

1. **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**
11:00 FS / 11:20 MP / 2:10 / 5:00 7:50
10:15 LFS / 10:40 LMF / 1:05 END
2. **POOH'S HEFFALUMP**
11:00 FS / 11:35 MP / 1:25 / 3:15 / 5:05 / 6:55
8:45 / 10:00 LFS / 10:35 LMF / 11:45 END

☎ 633-8970

sm megamall cinema 1

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:50 FS / 12:20 MP / 3:10 / 6:00
8:25 LFS / 8:50 LMF / 11:15 END

☎ 633-1901

sm cebu cinema

CINEMA 1: xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
11.30 MF / 1.30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30
9:10 LFS / 9.30 LMF / 11:10 END

CINEMA 3: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00 MP / 1:39 / 4:16 / 6:53
9:20 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:55 END

☎ (032) 231-3878

METRO MANILA

sm megamall

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4. THE INTERPRETER
5. SIX
6. THE WEDDING DATE
7. RESERVED
8. RESERVED
9. RESERVED
10. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11. POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
12. CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city fairview

1. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2. INTERPRETER
3. GUESS WHO
4. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5. CAN THIS BE LOVE
6. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8. THE PACIFIER
9. WEDDING DATE
10. SAHARA
11. SAMARA: RING 2
12. SIX

sm city north edsa

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. RESERVED
4. THE WEDDING DATE
5. GUESS WHO
6. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
7. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. SIX
3. THE WEDDING DATE
4. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5. FINDING NEVERLAND
6. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7. GUESS WHO
8. THE INTERPRETER
9. CAN THIS BE LOVE
10. SAHARA
11. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12. SAMARA: RING 2

sm city sta. mesa

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4. RESERVED
5. RESERVED
6. THE WEDDING DATE
7. SAHARA
8. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
9. SIX
10. GUESS WHO

sm city southmall

1. RESERVED
2. RESERVED
3. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5. GUESS WHO
6. SIX
7. CAN THIS BE LOVE
8. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
9. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
10. SAMARA: RING 2

sm city bicutan

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. THE INTERPRETER
4. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm cinema tutuban

1. RESERVED
2. RESERVED
3. RESERVED
4. RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat

1. THE JACKET
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

LUZON

sm city pampanga

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
3. THE PACIFIER
4. THE INTERPRETER
5. SAHARA
6. CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city baguio

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3. CAN THIS BE LOVE
4. THE WEDDING DATE

sm city batangas

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4. SAMARA: RING 2

sm city dasmariñas

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. THE INTERPRETER
4. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city marilao

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. THE JACKET
3. CAN THIS BE LOVE
4. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city bacoor

1. SAMARA: RING 2
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4. RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6. CAN THIS BE LOVE
7. THE INTERPRETER
8. SAHARA

sm city lucena

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3. CAN THIS BE LOVE
4. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu

1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2. RESERVED
3. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4. THE WEDDING DATE
5. FINDING NEVERLAND
6. THE PACIFIER
7. CAN THIS BE LOVE
8. SAHARA

sm city iloilo

1. THE PACIFIER
2. RESERVED
3. CAN THIS BE LOVE
4. THE JACKET
5. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7. RESERVED
8. ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR

sm city davao

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. BOOGEYMAN
3. CAN THIS BE LOVE
4. MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5. THE WEDDING DATE
6. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city cagayan de oro

1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2. CAN THIS BE LOVE
3. FINDING NEVERLAND
4. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Star Wars Episode III
Opens May 19

THE MOST AWAITED FILM OF THE YEAR OPENS MAY 18 IN SM CINEMAS

Be there when it happens!

Tickets Now available!

Buy your tickets before its too late!

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POSSESSED SURVIVOR TALKS AMITYVILLE HORROR

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

THE REAL GEORGE LUTZ
THE AMITYVILLE HAUNTED HOUSE
RYAN REYNOLDS AS GEORGE LUTZ

On November 13, 1973 Ronald Defeo of 112 Ocean Avenue confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying 'demonic spirits' in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre. The incident shocked America and the world.

Hollywood Reporter's CLINT MORRIS catches up with George Lutz, the real-life chap whose life was forever changed when he invested in that same property.

In this one-on-one chat, Lutz speaks about those infamous 28 days.

When were you told about the murders that had taken place at the house?

We were told about the murders there just before walking through it for the first time.

The realtor was someone that we never felt anything but respect for because she had the integrity to do this. She said to us that she was not sure if she should tell us what house it was before or after we had walked through it. She told us before and reminded us of the events a year before. We were forearmed or fore warned in this way and felt nothing - it was a beautiful house.

What kind of evidence do you have?

There were four major investigations done in the house, all with results that verified a presence or a force that made it uninhabitable.

Parish priest Ray Mancusco was interviewed on the In Search Of program and in court later confirmed his being slapped and told to get out and the cold he suddenly experienced there. He had been asked by us to come and bless the house on the day we moved in.

Well- known exorcist Father Malachi Martin spoke of it on the Oprah Winfrey Show and confirmed the house contained evil known to the church for some time. He visited the house several times.

There are also the pictures taken during the investigation of March 6, 1976. Several separate photographs have images that can only be said to highly unusual and startling. We are currently working on a book of these that contains commentary of two respected psychics, Ed and Lorraine Warren, that reviewed these photos with me and shared their own reactions to various places within the house.

ADVT.

TO BE CONTINUED. . .

SHANG CINEPLEX

❶ **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**
MTRCB: PG-13
12:55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10 LMF

❷ **GUESS WHO**
MTRCB: PG-13
12:40, 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00 LMF

❸ **SPONGEBOB**
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 2.45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00 LMF

❹ **INTERPRETER**
MTRCB PG-13
1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10 LMF

PREMIERE THEATRE XXX 2
MTRCB, PG-13 12 20, 2.45, 5:10, 7:35, 10.00 LMF

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Get Your Star Wars Movie Tickets Now!

Be one of the first to catch the simultaneous U S. screening of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith at the Shang Cineplex on May 18! Premiere screening starts at 10:00pm.

Advance tickets* for sale at no extra service fee from May 6, 2005 onwards. Available at the Shang Cineplex ticket counters at Level 6 and the ticket booth at Level 1.

* Selected screenings from May 18-22

Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P150
Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4738 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

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GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:30, 1:25, 4:20, 7:15, 10:10
PG13

CINEMA 2
TRIPLE X 2
10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10
PG13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM

MAY 7, 2005	ZSA ZSA PADILLA & KARYLLE	9:00PM
May 13 14 2005	ELLA MAY SAISON	8:30PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS CALL 721-6726 OR 721-0635

PAULA Abdul AP

'I don't lie'

NEW YORK—Paula Abdul apparently has no plans to keep a low profile. The "American Idol" judge being investigated for an alleged affair with a former contestant was set to make an appearance on NBC's "Saturday Night Live" over the weekend, the entertainment magazine show "The Insider" reported Friday.

Abdul is a paid "Insider" correspondent.

A spokesperson for "Saturday Night Live" would say only that NBC was hopeful the plans would come together.

A former "American Idol" contestant, Corey Clark, claimed this week that Abdul had an affair with him while he was competing in 2003 and coached him on how to do better on the Fox show.

Abdul issued a statement Friday extending "my deepest appreciation" to fans who have expressed their support for her.

"All my life, I have been taught to take the high road, and never to dignify salacious or false accusations," she said. "And I have been taught never, never to lie. Not only do I never lie; I never respond to lies, no matter how vicious, no matter how hurtful.

"I do trust my fans who can see through attempts at character assassination, and I do trust the essential fairness of the American public," she said.

A spokesperson for Abdul, Shawn Sachs, said he could not clarify what "lies" Abdul was referring to in her statement. *AP*

ACTRESS Goldie Hawn with her book AP

Goldie recalls a painful past

NEW YORK—Hollywood's archetypal ditsy blond Goldie Hawn went through dark days before she made it big, but the relentlessly upbeat actress said she took away. something positive from even her worst moments.

The title of her new memoir, "Goldie, A Lotus Grows in the Mud," was inspired by an Indian guru who told her the most beautiful flowers grow in the most unlikely surroundings—a metaphor she felt applied to her own life.

In an interview on Thursday, the 59-year-old actress said "there was a lot of emotion, but not pain" when she was writing the book. She explained: "I had worked through the painful experiences, believe it or not."

Early in the book, co-authored by journalist Wendy Holden and published this week, Hawn describes one Christmas Eve when she woke to find a man kneeling by her bed, fondling her under the covers.

How she recovered

Frightened, she shouted for her mother. The intruder, a friend of her older sister's, fled. Comforted by her mother, Goldie, 11 at the time, was upset, but able to recover. Praising her mother's opennes, she writes: "I never lost my trust in the male sex ...I will forever be grateful for the way it was handled."

As with many Hollywood Cinderella stories, Hawn had a number of gritty encounters in her early career, including a $30 gig as a go-go dancer in New Jersey.

On another occasion she was tricked into auditioning for Al Capp, only to realize the well-known cartoonist—who had changed into a revealing robe—was not interested in her acting skills.

"Mr. Capp, I will never, ever get a job like this," she told him. She said he replied: "Then go back and marry a Jewish dentist. ... You'll never get anywhere in this business, Goldie Hawn." *Reuters*

SEQUINED tanks bought from Regine Tolentino

NORA Aunor-inspired outfits Teri acquired from mom and aunts, all Noranians.

LONG-SLEEVED round necks hide his veiny arms

FAVE faux fur jacket

Teri, not Nora, Onor

BOOTS from *ukay-ukay*, P120; below, the dress he wore when he sang with La Aunor

TERI spoofing Alwina of the "Mulawin" hit series

TERI prefers flared and boot-cut jeans. "They're perfect with my pointed shoes and boots," he says.

From page A2-8

est wig is the one I wore when I portrayed Aladdin in a live show at The Library. This has been with me since 1996. It comes with a pair of orange trousers and vest."

"I still have my yellow 'Kill Joy' jumpsuit that I wore for a segment on 'S-Files.' Totoy Madriaga made it. Uma Thurman's outfit in 'Kill Bill' inspired it."

SHOES

"The pairs that are most precious to me are those that I bought in Baguio's *ukay-ukay*, like these loafers that I got for P150. I think these are made of pony skin. Another pair, (a brown pointed leather pair), which I think is snakeskin, cost me P120. This is my all-time favorite. *Napudpod na nga*. I wear it a lot because it looks good with jeans.

"From the same *ukay-ukay* is this pair of boots made of synthetic leather and denim fabric. This costs only a little over P100. But I also have a black leather pair from Linea Italia that I bought just for the 25th anniversary of 'Eat Bulaga!' Expensive *na dapat, kasi* 25 years *na*.

"Never wear boots without trying them on. Make sure they're comfortable. The test is, if you can run in them, they're worth buying."

JACKETS

"I bought my favorite jacket for P100. It's water repellent and really keeps me warm. I've had it for four years.

"These days, I'm into these colorful jackets with faux fur collars. I use them for shows. I think the friend who sold me these pieces got them in Singapore. The jackets come in white, fuchsia, green, blue and yellow."

TOPS

"This chiffon long-sleeved top with ruffles has been with me for years. It looks great onstage. I got this for P30 in Baguio. *Parang ang ganda ganda ko dito*.

"This piece of camouflage long-sleeved shirt is memorable because I wore it for a 'Miss Saigon'-inspired show at The Library. I played the role of Chris. My partner and I sang 'Sun and Moon.'

"Mommy Toni Rose (Gayda, one of Teri's co-hosts in 'Eat Bulaga!') gifted me with two long-sleeved blouses. I like them because they're stretchable.

"I also really like long-sleeved turtleneck tops. I have them in all colors. Classy *kasi ang dating*. But since it's too hot to be wearing turtlenecks these days, I buy round-necks. Long-sleeves *pa rin*. I don't like showing off my arms because they're veiny. I also wear a few blouses with spaghetti straps that I bought from Regine Tolentino. They're sequined and perfect with my fur-collared jackets. They're quite new. Regine brought a few pieces to the set when she guested in 'Lagot Ka.'

"Molecules provide most of my shirts in 'Eat Bulaga!' while RRJ sends the stuff that I wear on 'Lagot Ka.'"

SPECIAL headpieces for live shows

JEANS

"My favorite pair is a gift from [singer] Gladys Guevarra. It's ripped and flared. It's very versatile. When I can't decide what to wear for a show, I use this with my favorite chiffon blouse and yellow boots.

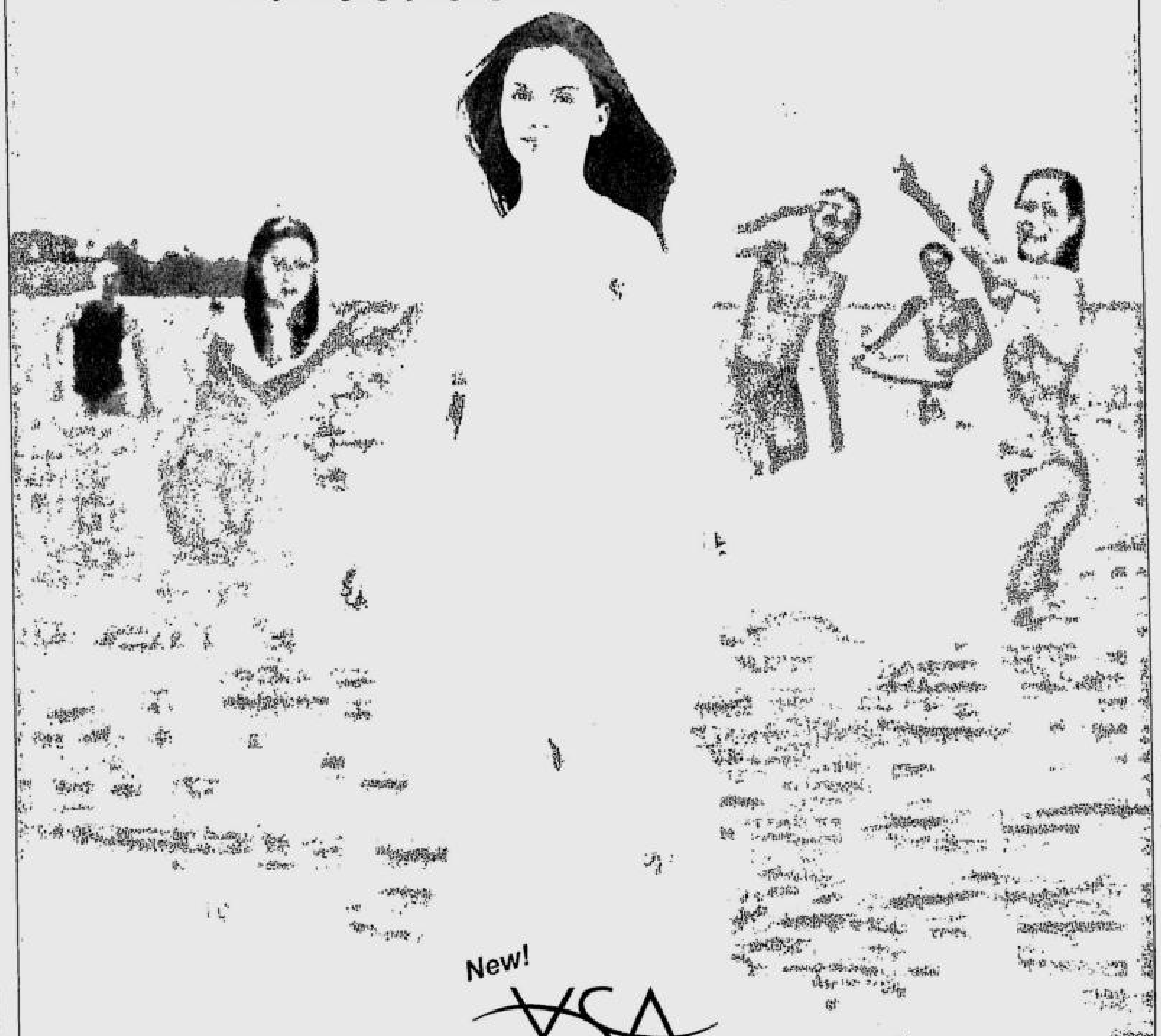
"I like simple designs in jeans. I prefer the flared and boot-cut types. They're perfect with my pointed shoes and boots."

SLEEPWEAR

"I really don't care what I wear to bed, but I like cotton jogging pants and razorback tanks, especially those that are really, really old and soft. *Ayaw ko ng bagong laba* so I don't put them in the laundry bin until I've worn them for about a week."

"MISS Saigon" top and presents from Toni Rose Gayda

TERI as Aladdin



SUMAIYO ANG KAPUTIAN.
Humayo kang taglay ang kagandahan. Dahil sa kaputiang dulot ng YSA.

New!
YSA
BOTANICA
FACE & BODY
Whitening Lotion

Ang natatanging whitening lotion para sa mukha at buong katawan. Pitong tulog lang, ang pinapangarap mong kaputian ay makakamtan mo na. Pantay na puting kapuri-puri, kinis na kabigha-bighani.

- Dermatologist-formulated to whiten the skin evenly in just 1 week
- With sun protection compounds to shield the skin from harmful UVA/UVB rays
- Formulated with Cucumber extract to soften and moisturize the skin, and Green Tea extract to protect the skin from irritation

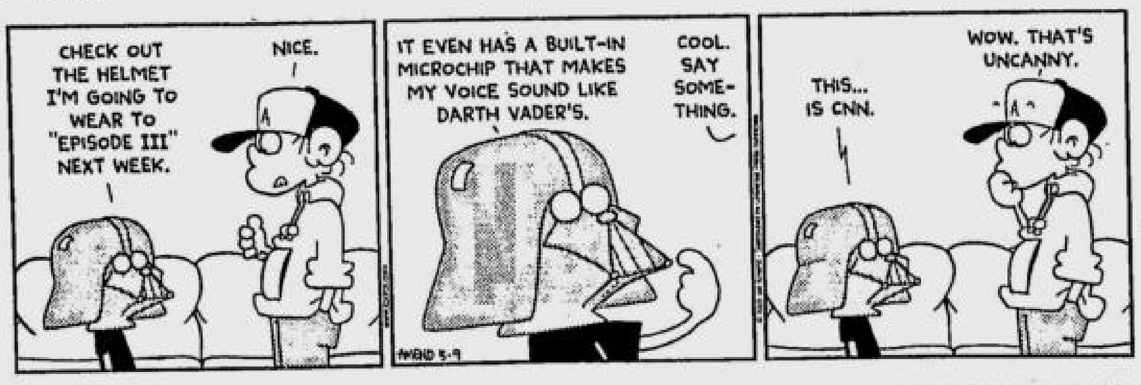
The glory of White ... in just 7 days!

Also try YSA Botanica face and body whitening system!

For comments and suggestions, call the YSA Hotline: 912-0703

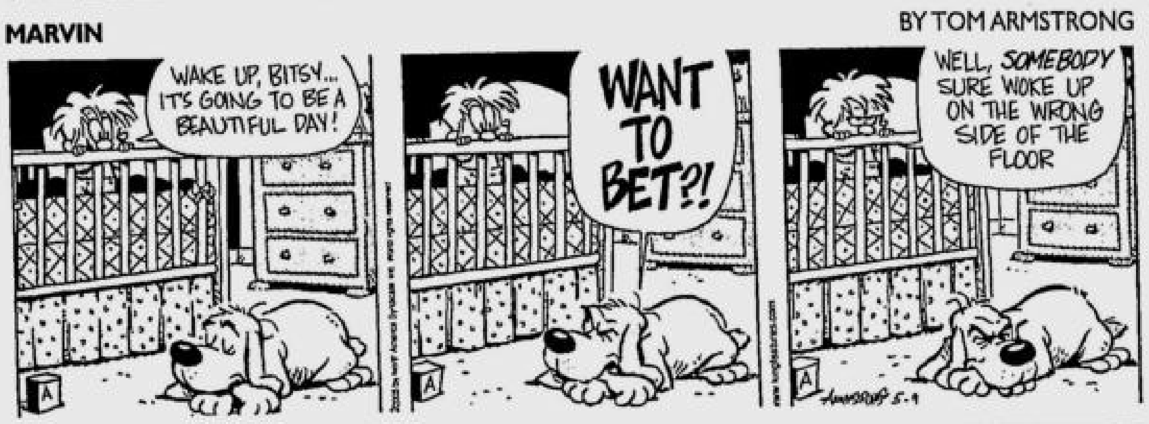
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CHECK OUT THE HELMET I'M GOING TO WEAR TO "EPISODE III" NEXT WEEK.
NICE.
IT EVEN HAS A BUILT-IN MICROCHIP THAT MAKES MY VOICE SOUND LIKE DARTH VADER'S.
COOL. SAY SOME-THING.
THIS... IS CNN.
WOW. THAT'S UNCANNY.
AMEND 5-9

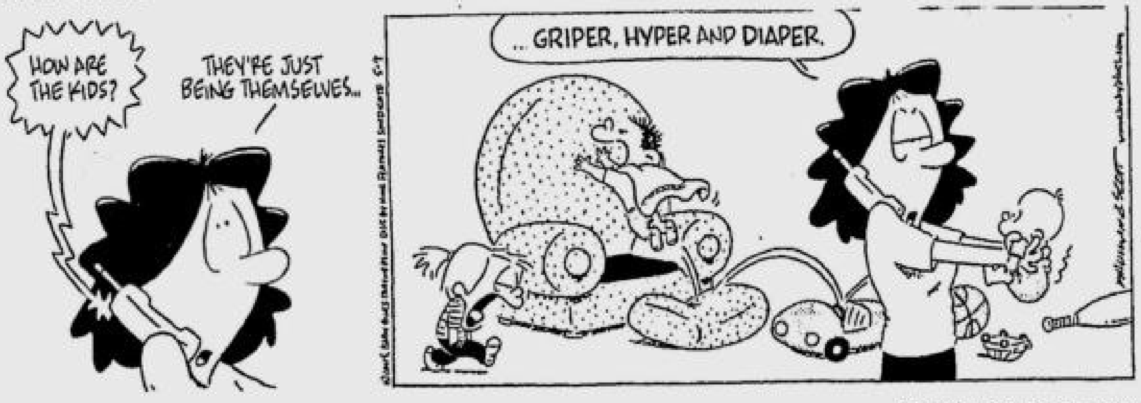
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


WAKE UP, BITSY... IT'S GOING TO BE A BEAUTIFUL DAY!
WANT TO BET?!
WELL, SOMEBODY SURE WOKE UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE FLOOR
A
ARMSTRONG 5-9

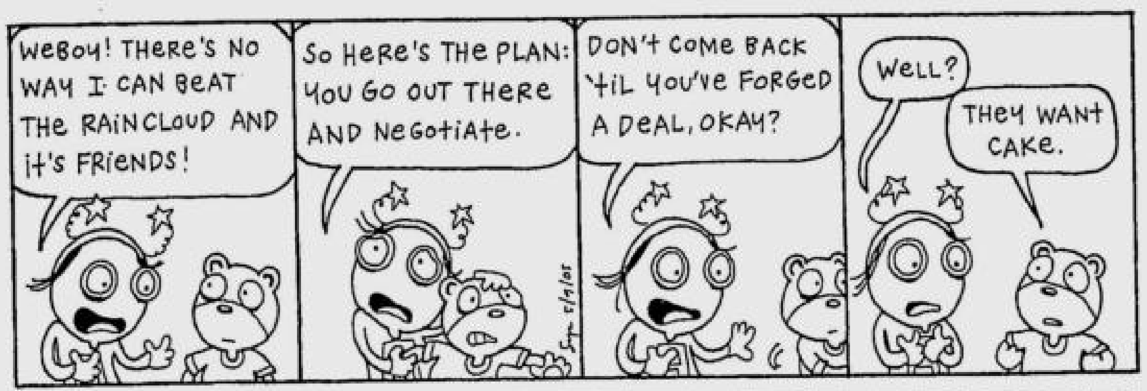
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW ARE THE KIDS?
THEY'RE JUST BEING THEMSELVES...
... GRIPER, HYPER AND DIAPER.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WeBoy! There's no way I can beat the raincloud and it's friends!
So here's the plan: You go out there and negotiate.
Don't come back 'til you've forged a deal, okay?
Well?
They want cake.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong sense of justice and fair play. You often fight for the underdog. You have a caring, protective nature. Many of you can radiate an astonishing power! You love beauty, and you hate tyranny. You will have to make an important choice this year. It opens a door that leads to other doors. Choose wisely.
Birthdate of: Candice Bergen, actress; James M. Barrie, novelist/playwright; Glenda Jackson, actress/politician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have a deeper understanding about philosophical, religious or political topics right now. The penny has dropped! Suddenly, you see the story behind the story.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a marvelous day to do research of any kind. You have a very penetrating mind right now. Look into how to best use the resources of others.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): A discussion with a friend will definitely get to the bottom of things now. Perhaps it's not a bad idea to put your cards on the table.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a good day to think about your long-term future. Where do you want to be 10 years now? Five years from now? What can you do now to start to move in that direction?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel you see something important now. It could be a religious truth or something that is more philosophical. You want to tell others about your revelations.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have excellent ideas about how to share something with someone else. You're not casual about anything right now. You're giving many things a lot of serious thought.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good time for an important discussion with partners and friends. You're willing to talk about things you normally would hide.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You can be very productive at work today. Nothing is too much trouble. You're willing to go that extra mile to get your facts right. It's a good day to fix what is broken.

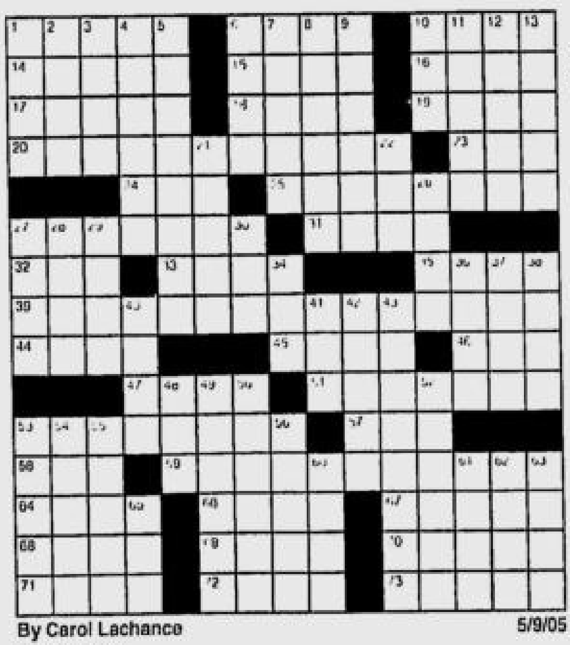
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your ability to explain or teach things to younger people today is excellent. You understand what makes others tick. That's how you know how to appeal to them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Fix whatever is broken at home. Similarly, you might be able to mend domestic differences. It's easy for you to see beneath the surface of things now.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're extremely convincing today. Not only are your communications with others very powerful; you seem to know exactly what other people are thinking!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might have brilliant new moneymaking ideas today. If you have any ideas, write them down. Trust your instincts. Your mind is very keen and penetrating right now.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Carol Lachance
Massey, Ont.

5/9/05

ACROSS
- 1 Get a grip on
- 6 Carson's replacement
- 10 Unruly kid
- 14 Way to go
- 15 Romanian city
- 16 Be an omen of
- 17 Photo book
- 18 Lie doggo
- 19 Scoundrels
- 20 Garage sale rivals
- 23 Solidify
- 24 Spare part?
- 25 Flair
- 27 Toy racer
- 31 Calcutta costume
- 32 Intention
- 33 Caustic solution
- 35 Gallivants
- 39 Fixed, fanciful idea
- 44 __ St. Vincent Millay
- 45 Sun too much
- 46 Approval vote
- 47 Motown Marvin
- 51 Stay alert
- 53 Lantern fuel
- 57 Big __, CA
- 58 Final degree
- 59 Explosive situation
- 64 Nautical greeting
- 66 Zorro's disguise
- 67 Phone opener
- 68 Walking stick
- 69 Fever and shivers
- 70 Writing assignment
- 71 Recognized
- 72 Cry out for
- 73 All-male parties

DOWN
- 1 7-time Wimbledon winner
- 2 __ with the punches
- 3 Seine feeder
- 4 Dollar bill artist
- 5 Native American rations
- 6 Bert of "The Wizard of Oz"
- 7 Eleniak of "Baywatch"
- 8 __ Raiders (Ralph's supporters)
- 9 One-named folk singer
- 10 Eng. channel
- 11 Cook in ovens
- 12 Viper
- 13 Irritable
- 21 Bahamian island
- 22 Elton John's title
- 26 Autograph
- 27 Kemo __
- 28 Bent the truth
- 29 Bad sign
- 30 __ Tin Tin
- 34 Coming-out gal
- 36 Writer Seton
- 37 Title paper
- 38 Stick it out
- 40 Villain in "Othello"
- 41 Hoagie
- 42 Brittany port
- 43 Headlong assaults
- 48 Silvery grey
- 49 __ of the guard
- 50 Madden
- 52 Singer Tubb
- 53 Natural talent
- 54 One of the Coen brothers
- 55 Avignon's river
- 56 Follow as a consequence
- 60 Just managed
- 61 "Lohengrin" lady
- 62 Smeltery waste
- 63 Santa's sackful
- 65 Evergreen tree

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

D	I	A	L	E	C	T	S	■	M	I	N	C	E	S
E	N	R	O	L	L	E	E	■	A	C	O	R	N	S
R	A	I	N	I	E	S	T	■	H	E	R	O	E	S
I	R	S	■	C	A	T	■	I	A	B	■	■	■	■
V	A	T	■	I	V	E	■	E	R	E	M	I	T	E
E	G	O	■	T	E	D	■	P	A	R	A	D	E	D
S	E	C	S	■	■	■	H	I	N	G	L	E	T	S
■	■	R	H	A	P	S	O	D	I	S	T	S	■	■
Y	E	A	R	B	O	O	K	■	■	■	S	O	P	S
A	L	T	E	R	E	R	■	M	P	G	■	F	E	W
M	I	S	D	A	T	E	■	A	R	C	■	M	R	I
■	■	■	■	S	I	R	■	H	O	N	■	A	C	T
A	R	A	B	I	C	■	A	L	C	A	T	R	A	Z
S	A	L	I	V	A	■	T	E	N	T	A	C	L	E
S	P	I	N	E	L	■	P	R	E	A	C	H	E	R

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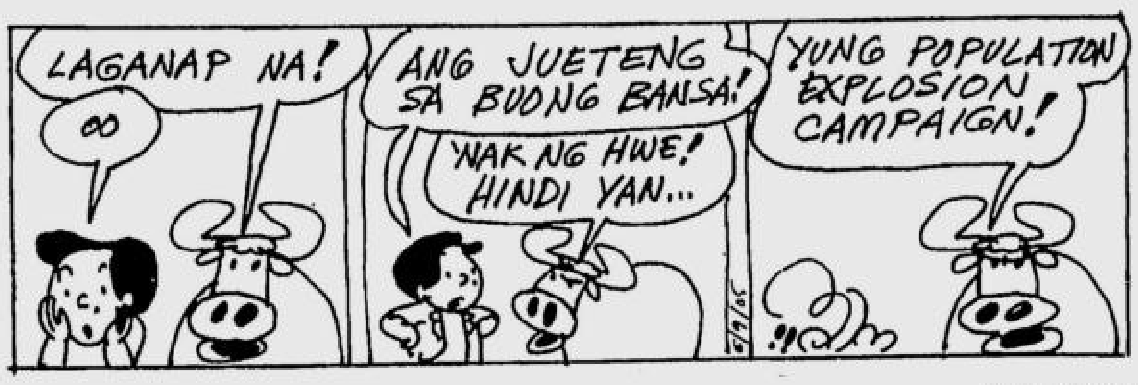
5/9/05

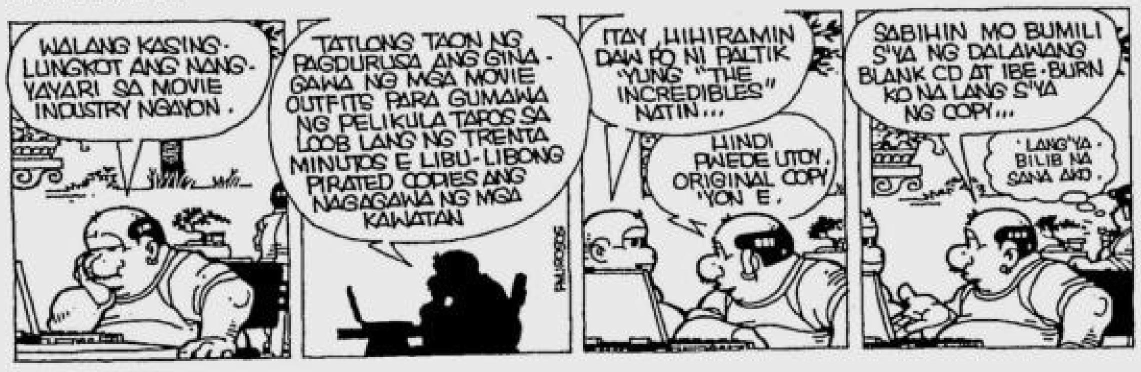
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


LAGANAP NA!
∞
ANG JUETENG SA BUONG BANSA!
'NAK NG HWE! HINDI YAN...
YUNG POPULATION EXPLOSION CAMPAIGN!
5/9/05

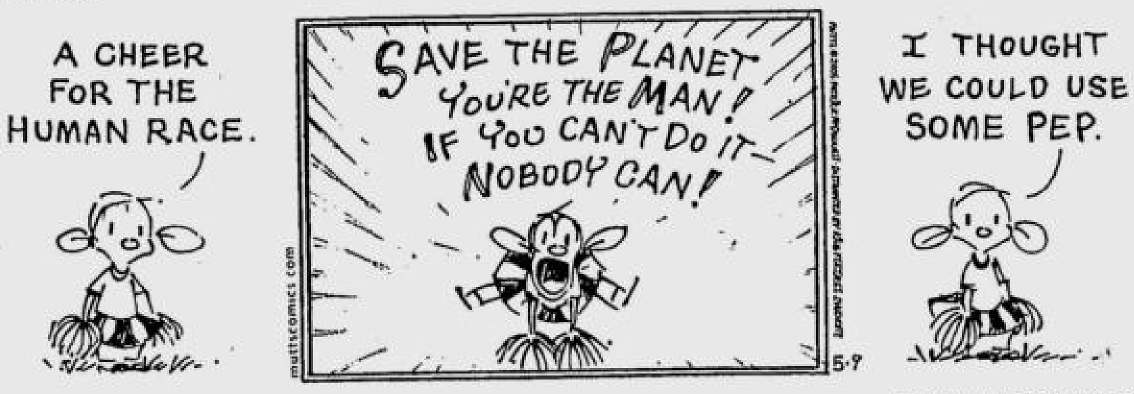
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


WALANG KASING-LUNGKOT ANG NANGYAYARI SA MOVIE INDUSTRY NGAYON.
TATLONG TAON NG PAGDURUSA ANG GINAGAWA NG MGA MOVIE OUTFITS PARA GUMAWA NG PELIKULA TAPOS SA LOOB LANG NG TRENTA MINUTOS E LIBU-LIBONG PIRATED COPIES ANG NAGAGAWA NG MGA KAWATAN
ITAY, HIHIRAMIN DAW PO NI PALTIK 'YUNG "THE INCREDIBLES" NATIN...
HINDI PWEDE UTOY, ORIGINAL COPY 'YON E.
SABIHIN MO BUMILI S'YA NG DALAWANG BLANK CD AT IBE-BURN KO NA LANG S'YA NG COPY...
LANG'YA, BILIB NA SANA AKO.

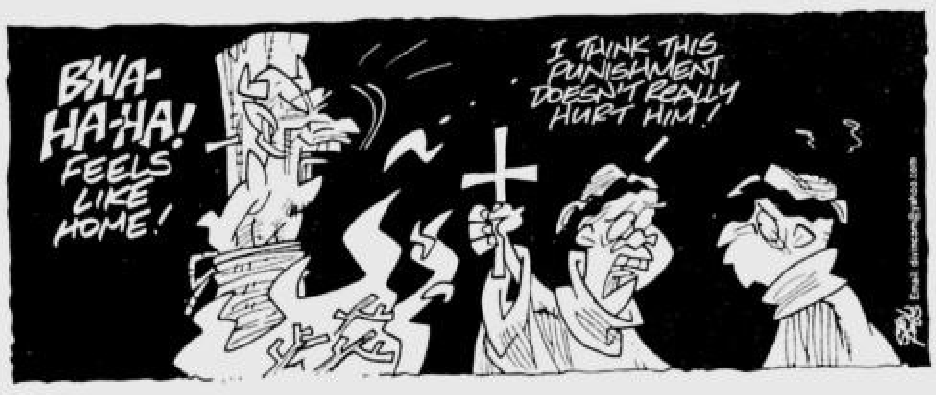
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


A CHEER FOR THE HUMAN RACE.
SAVE THE PLANET YOU'RE THE MAN! IF YOU CAN'T DO IT NOBODY CAN!
I THOUGHT WE COULD USE SOME PEP.
muttscomics.com
5-9

DIVINE COMEDY

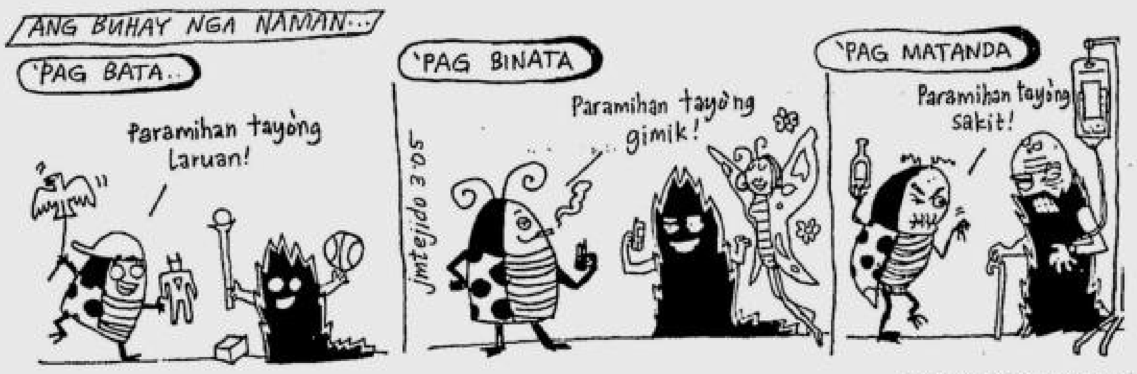
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BWA-HA-HA! FEELS LIKE HOME!
I THINK THIS PUNISHMENT DOESN'T REALLY HURT HIM!

THE INQUISITION OF A DEMON

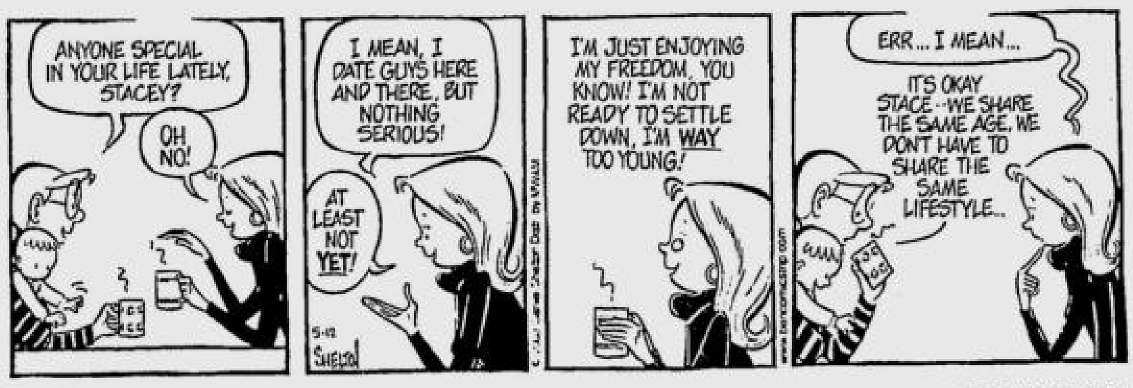
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG BUHAY NGA NAMAN...
'PAG BATA..
Paramihan tayong laruan!
'PAG BINATA
Paramihan tayong gimik!
'PAG MATANDA
Paramihan tayong sakit!
jmtejido 3.05

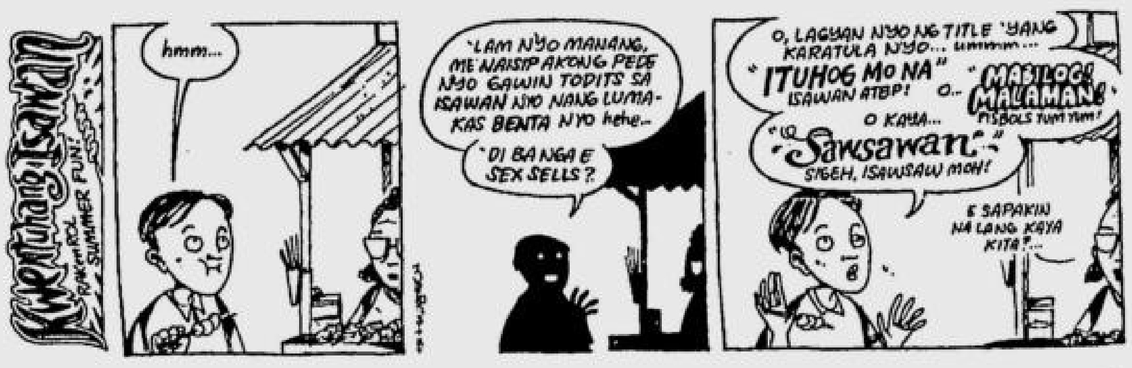
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ANYONE SPECIAL IN YOUR LIFE LATELY, STACEY?
OH NO!
I MEAN, I DATE GUYS HERE AND THERE, BUT NOTHING SERIOUS!
AT LEAST NOT YET!
I'M JUST ENJOYING MY FREEDOM, YOU KNOW! I'M NOT READY TO SETTLE DOWN, I'M WAY TOO YOUNG!
ERR... I MEAN...
IT'S OKAY STACE--WE SHARE THE SAME AGE. WE DON'T HAVE TO SHARE THE SAME LIFESTYLE..
5-12 SHELTON

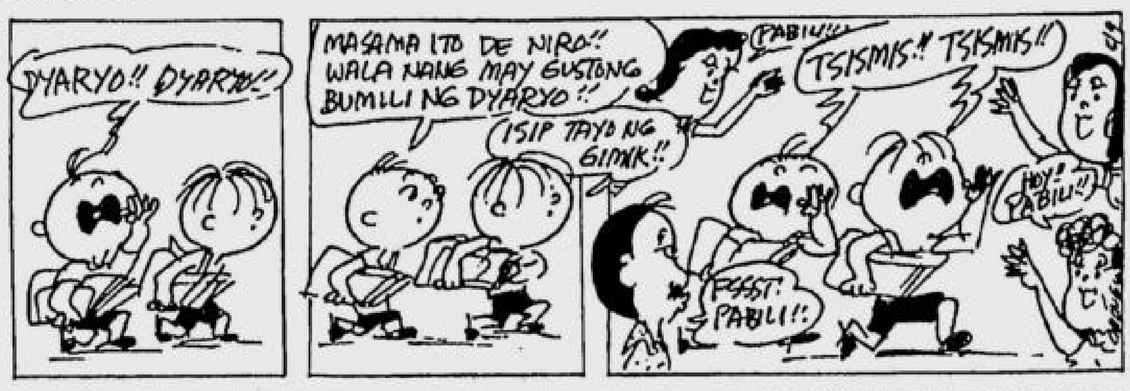
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


Kwentuhang Isawan
RAKENROL SUMMER FUN!
hmm...
'LAM NYO MANANG, ME NAISIP AKONG PEDE NYO GAWIN TODITS SA ISAWAN NYO NANG LUMAKAS BENTA NYO hehe..
DI BA NGA E SEX SELLS?
O, LAGYAN NYO NG TITLE 'YANG KARATULA NYO... ummm...
"ITUHOG MO NA" ISAWAN ATBP! O..
"MABILOG! MALAMAN!" FISBOLS TUM YUM!
O KAYA...
"Sawsawan" SIGEH, ISAWSAW MOH!
E SAPAKIN NA LANG KAYA KITA?...

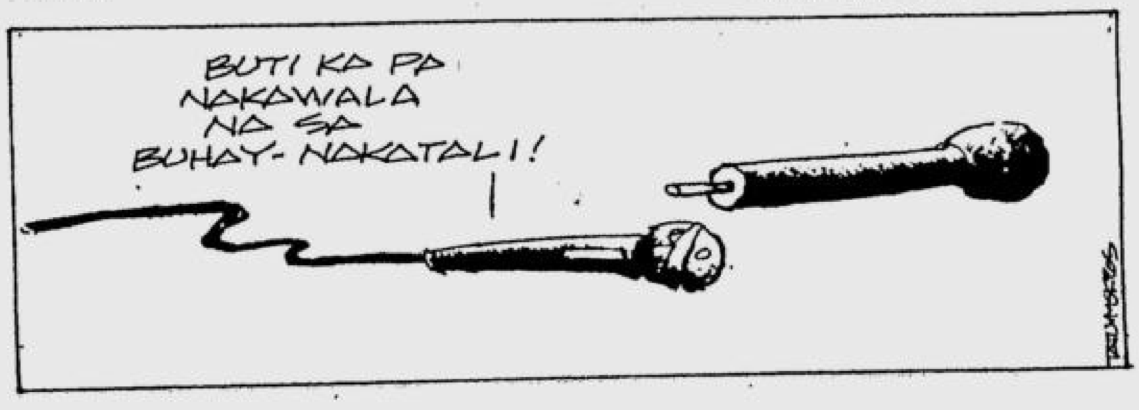
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DYARYO!! DYARYO!!
MASAMA ITO DE NIRO!! WALA NANG MAY GUSTONG BUMILI NG DYARYO!!
ISIP TAYO NG GIMIK!!
PABILI!!
TSISMIS!! TSISMIS!!
HOY! PABILI!!
PSST! PABILI!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BUTI KA PA NAKAWALA NA SA BUHAY-NAKATALI!

Promising viewing options on Cinemax

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FILM buffs don't have to go far to get their cinematic kicks, some of which are readily available on cable television. For instance, on the Cinemax movie channel this month, you can keep a glinting eye out for these promising viewing options.

Today, 1:15 p.m., "Anna's Dream": A gymnastics accident leaves 18-year-old Anna Morgan (**Lindsay Felton**) a paraplegic. After her recovery, she returns to school and bravely faces her classmates' reactions. She learns to live her life with dignity with the support of her parents and friends.

May 29, 10:40 p.m., "Dead Again": Mike Church (**Kenneth Branagh**) is a private detective who specializes in finding heirs and missing persons. But his next assignment proves to be his greatest challenge: Grace (**Emma Thompson**) has amnesia and Mike has to help discover her true identity.

Unfortunately, she thinks she's Margaret Strauss, a woman who was murdered over 40 years ago. Is Margaret a phantom of Grace's imagination, or is this a serious case of split personality? As Margaret's life threatens to take over Grace's, Mike is in a race against time to help Grace find herself, before she's lost forever.

"Deconstructing Sarah": Beautiful Los Angeles advertising executive Sarah (**Sheila Kelley**) appears to be living a normal, successful existence. But at night she is Ruth, living the secret life of a nymphomaniac. Her exploration of the city's sordid sexual underground catches up with her, and she is murdered. Her friend Elizabeth (**Rachel Ticotin**) attempts to track down her killer, and in doing so she discovers Sarah's double life.

"Dolores Claiborne": This character-driven thriller examines the tension between Selena (**Jennifer Jason-Leigh**), a successful New York journalist, and her mother Dolores (**Kathy Bates**), whom she must comfort when Dolores becomes the prime suspect in the murder of a rich society matron. As the society matron's servant, Dolores had endured 40 years of abuse, prompting John Mackey (**Christopher Plummer**) to believe that she killed her cruel employer.

May 13, 2:45 p.m., "Forever Young": In 1939, **Mel Gibson**'s fiancee suffers an accident and lapses into a coma, prompting himself to be cryogenically frozen. Fifty years later, he is revived by **Jamie Lee Curtis** and her son (**Elijah Wood**). Trying to acquaint himself with the customs of another era and searching for his long-lost love, Gibson's character discovers that his romantic quest leads him to a surprising truth.

May 12, 9:45 a.m., "Ghosts of Mississippi": In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was murdered in his own driveway. For over 30 years, his assassin has remained free. Is it too late to do the right thing? That's the question this taut courtroom drama poses. It takes viewers through the final trial of the assassin, Byron De La Beckwith (**James Woods**). District Attorney Bobby DeLaughter's alliance with Ever's widow (**Whoopi Goldberg**) drives his relentless quest for justice.

May 14, 9:15 a.m., "Indictment: The McMartin Trial": This explosive film, winner of three Emmy and two Golden Globe awards, exposes the case of the McMartins, a family dedicated to looking after young children, but accused of bizarre activities like satanic rituals, child pornography and rape.

'Footloose' auditions

STAGES, sister company of Trumpets, is holding auditions for the musical "Footloose" at 2 p.m., May 15 at the Trumpets Playshop, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. For details, call 8181111 local 209, or e-mail stages_pr@i-manila.com.ph.

Pure Soul at Merk's

MERK'S presents Pure Soul: **Luke Mijares, Keith Martin** and **Aretha** and the Souled-Out Band on May 15.

Other acts: on May 23 and 30, **Bernie Uy** fills the house with music and laughter. Call 7574720.

CMMA 2005

IF you want to nominate an outstanding radio broadcaster for this year's Catholic Mass Media Awards, make sure you comply with these requirements:

Entries should be submitted on high-quality audiocassette or compact disc. To facilitate judging, entries must include five audible cassettes or CDs each of each program, submitted in protective cases.

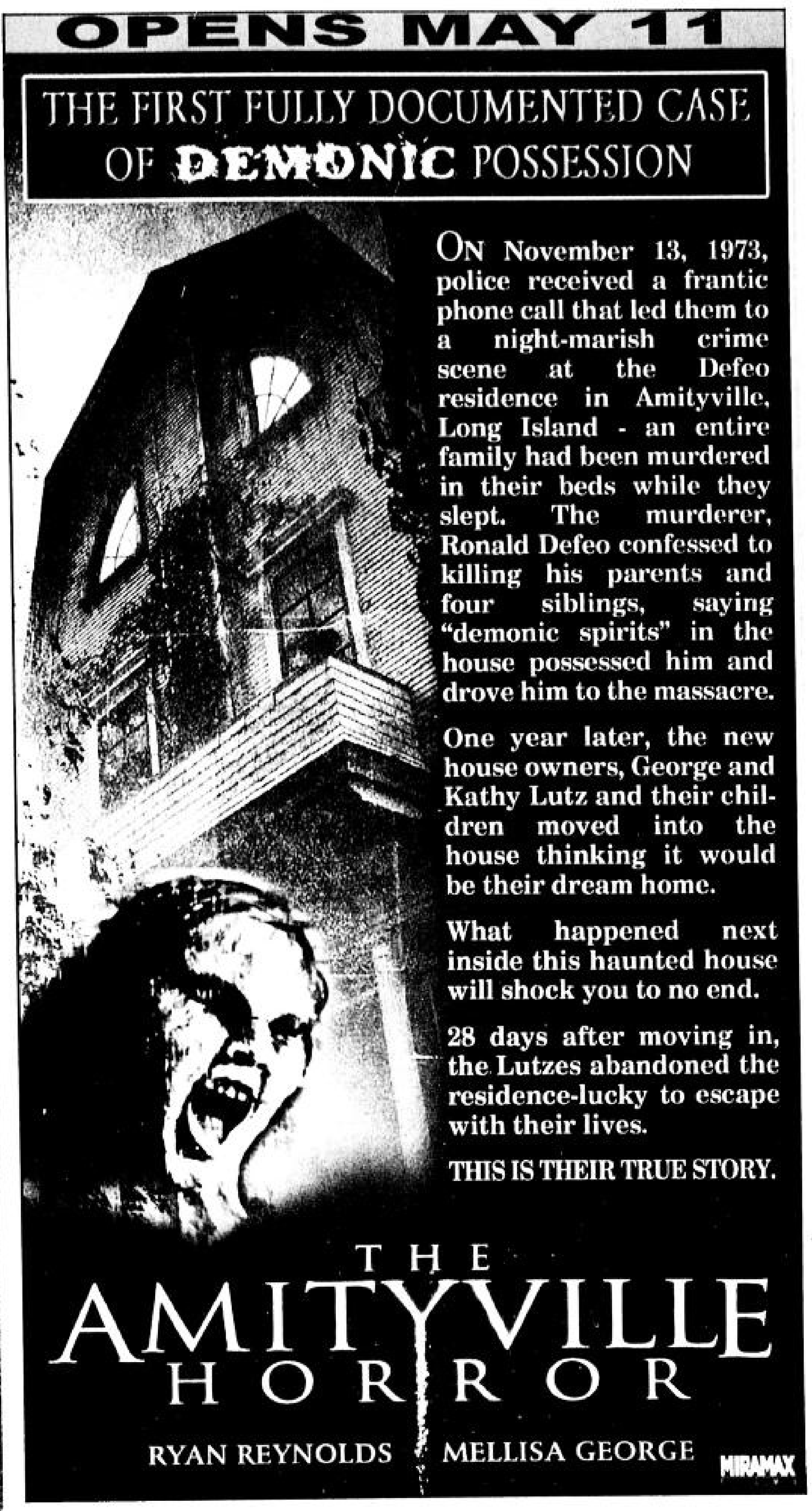
Separate tapes or CDs are required for different categories. Every tape or disc must carry the official cue sheet indicating title, length and category listed. Entries should be submitted with a one-page description. For details, call 8674026.

Europe at the Shang

THE SHANGRI-LA Plaza Mall opens its door to Europe with these attractions: Ongoing until May 15, "It's Only the Colours of the Shirt That Counts," an exhibit of memorabilia from top football teams. May 13, "Baile!" dances from Spain as performed by the students of **Guillermo Gomez Rivera**.

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

starmall EDSA-SHAW	METROPOLIS ALABANG star	starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. No. 726.61.60	Tel. No. 850.42.85	Tel. No. 874.43.99
3 Can This Be Love	1 Can This Be Love	1 War Eagles
4 Kingdom of Heaven	2 Tagos sa Laman	2 Rental Reservation
5 XXX 2	3 Under Renovation	Free Style Live! Metropolis Alabang May 7 Sat 2pm at the Trade Hall (4th level)
Rachel Ann Go Live Starmall Edsa May 7 Sat 3pm Food Court (2nd level)	4 Under Renovation	
	5 Kingdom of Heaven	
	6 XXX 2	



OPENS MAY 11

THE FIRST FULLY DOCUMENTED CASE OF DEMONIC POSSESSION

ON November 13, 1973, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a night-marish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been murdered in their beds while they slept. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying "demonic spirits" in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.

One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.

What happened next inside this haunted house will shock you to no end.

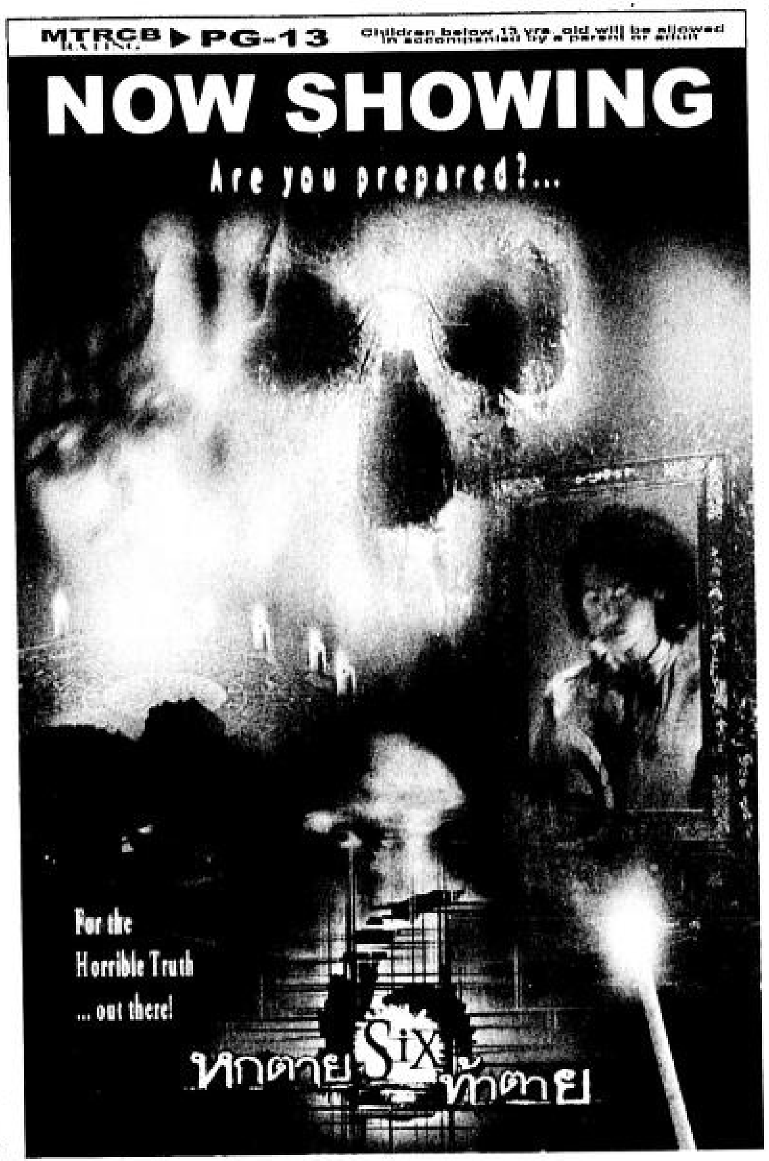
28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the residence-lucky to escape with their lives.

THIS IS THEIR TRUE STORY.

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR

RYAN REYNOLDS MELLISA GEORGE

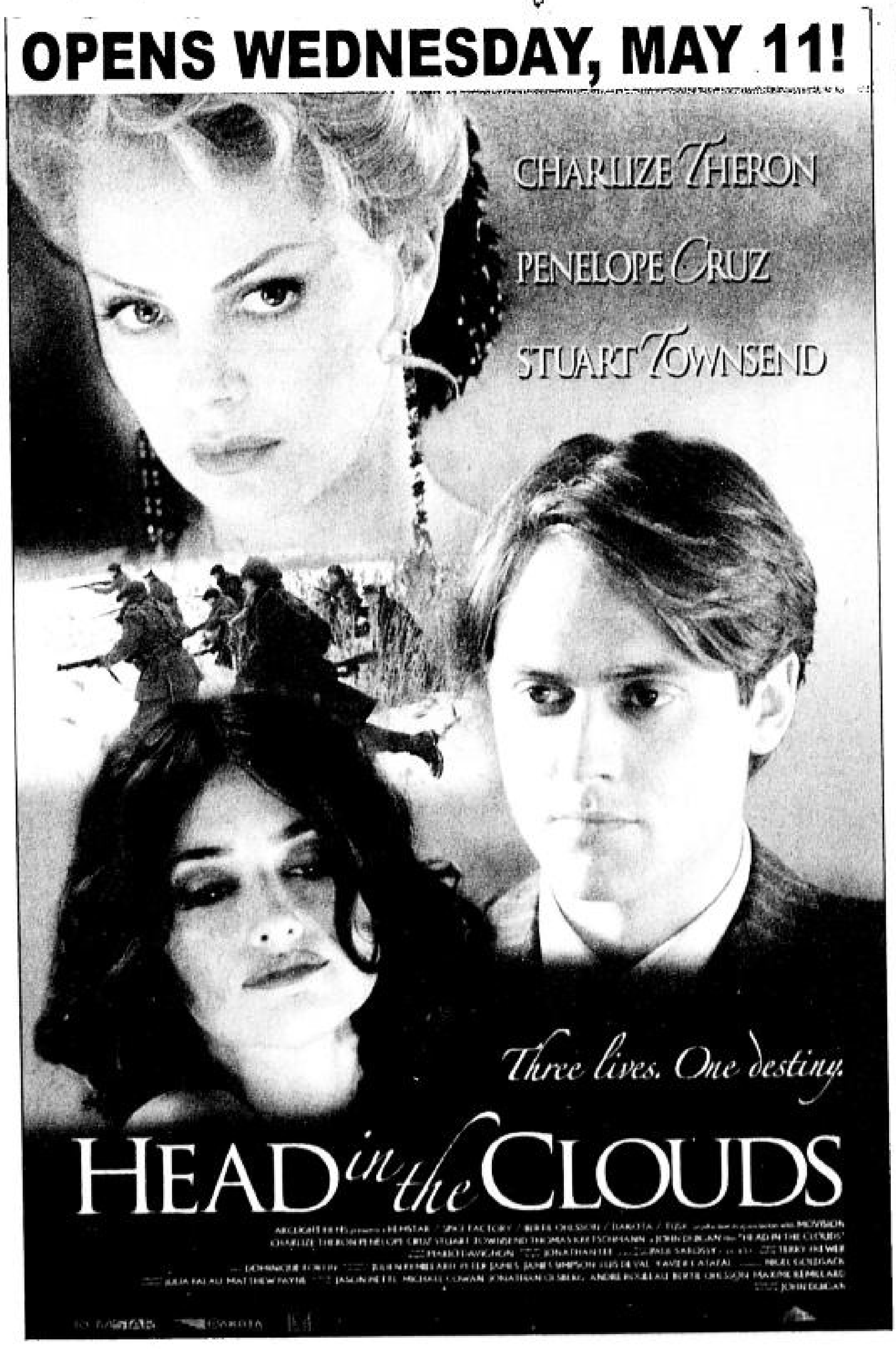
MIRAMAX



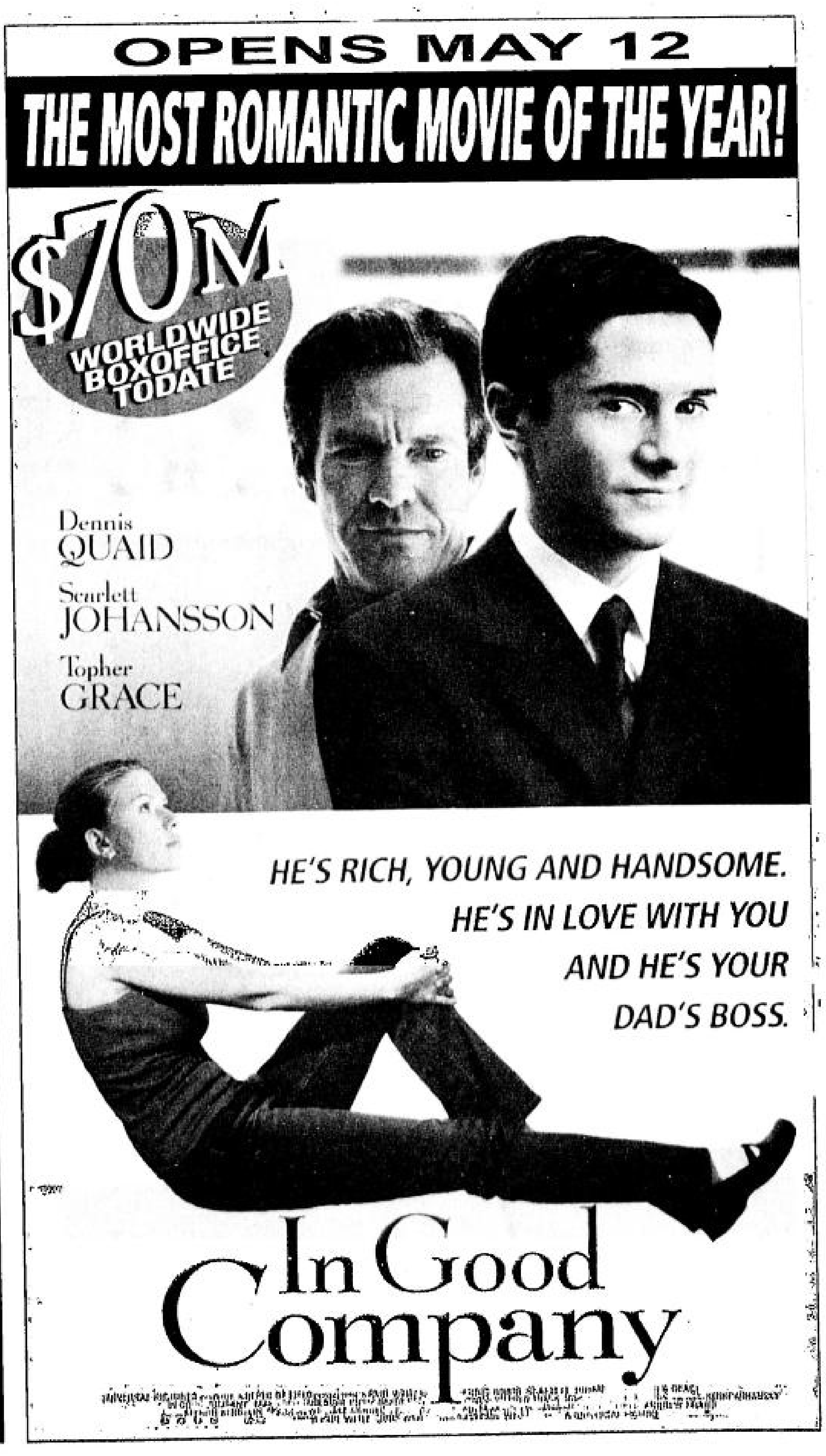
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult

NOW SHOWING

Are you prepared?...
For the Horrible Truth ... out there!
หกตาย Six ท้าตาย



OPENS WEDNESDAY, MAY 11!



OPENS MAY 12

THE MOST ROMANTIC MOVIE OF THE YEAR!

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Teri, not Nora, Onor

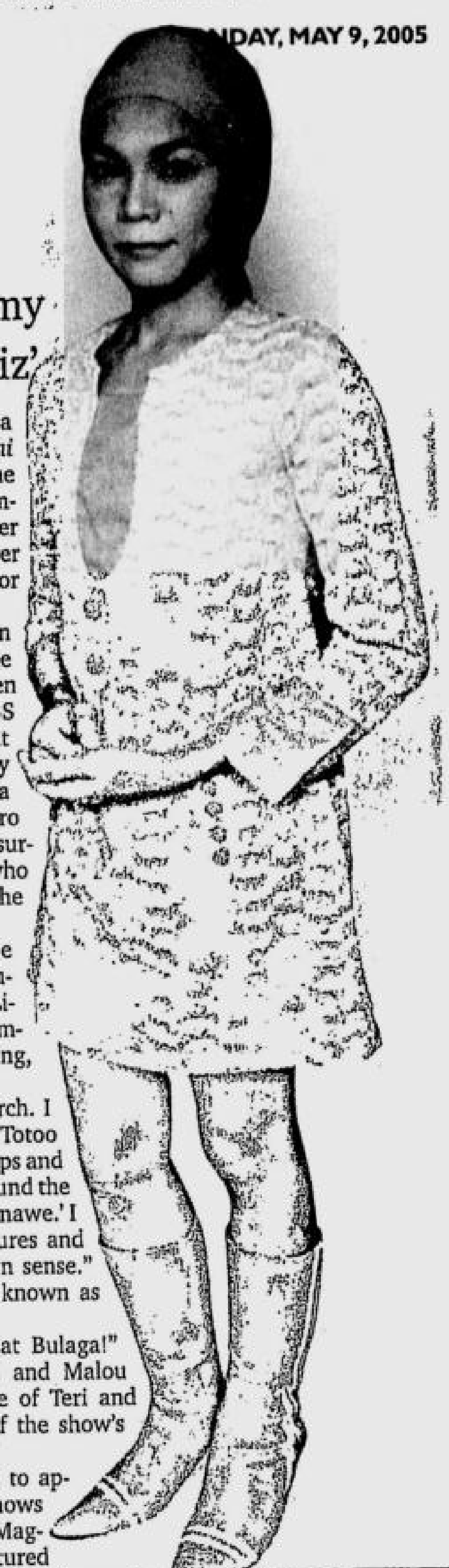
By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Raffy Lerma

COMEDIAN Teri Onor, who rose to fame by impersonating actress Nora Aunor, considers a compliment from the Superstar herself as the highest he has ever received.

"On national television, Ate Guy (Nora's nickname) told me that among all the actors who impersonated her, I was the one who looked very much like her when she was younger," Teri told INQUIRER Entertainment. We were in his spanking new home in New Manila, Quezon City.

He recalled how flattered he had been: "She said that in front of other known *Ate* Guy impersonators."

Teri, Dexter B. Dominguez in real life, said he grew up in an environment that worshipped the Superstar.



'Ate Guy was my key to show biz'

"My mother (Priscilla Bautista) said *pinaglihi ako kay* Ate Guy. She adores Ate Guy. I remember tagging along with her and my aunts whenever they watched Nora Aunor films."

Dexter was raised in Abucay, Bataan. He is the youngest of seven children and is a graduate of BS Computer Engineering at the Adamson University in Manila. "When I was a member of Tinik ng Teatro in Adamson, I, too, was surrounded by people who idolized Nora Aunor," he added.

In 1997, Andrew de Real, owner of the popular comedy club The Library, asked Dexter to impersonate Nora, saying, "You resemble her."

"So I did some research. I watched her films like, 'Totoo Ba ang Tsismis?' 'Lollipops and Roses,' 'Nora Aunor Around the World,' 'Himala' and 'Banawe.' I also looked at her pictures and took note of her fashion sense." He eventually became known as Teri Onor.

It was then that "Eat Bulaga!" producer Toni Tuviera and Malou Choa-Fagar took notice of Teri and featured him in one of the show's segments, "VideOkray."

Soon enough, offers to appear on other GMA 7 shows came. Mel Tiangco's "Magpakailanman" featured Teri's life story and "S-Files" commissioned him to host their "Kill Bill" segment.

Now, Teri is regularly seen on "Lagot Ka, Susumbong Kita" and "Love to Love," also on GMA 7. And he still performs in comedy clubs like Zirkoh and Klownz.

"I always tell my friends: Ate Guy was my key to show biz, 'Eat Bulaga!' was the door that opened to many opportunities, and GMA 7 is the room where I plan to stay."

COSTUMES

"I wore this silver-black gown by Raul Ramirez during my first-ever concert in 2003 at the Comic Lab in Malate. This is memorable because Nora Aunor was my guest performer. Bongga! *Kasama ko ang* Superstar. She was in her typical jeans and jacket.

"I own a lot of clothes in the style that Nora Aunor was known for in the '60s. Some of these outfits are actually older than me. These are from my mom and aunts, all Noranians. I used to have more, but they were destroyed when our old house was razed by fire.

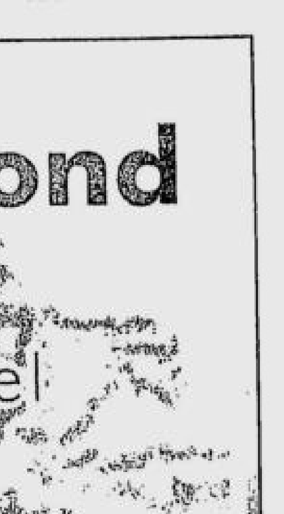
"The costume I wore for my first major concert in Balanga, Bataan last February is memorable, too. For the opening number I made my entrance in a Raul Ramirez number—a silver and gray gown with matching headdress. *Para akong pinaparadang poon* (religious statue). Underneath the gown, I wore a two-piece sequined dress by Totoy Madriaga.

"I wear a lot of headdresses when I do live shows for The Library, like this Darna headdress that costume designer Ferdie Daliva made for me. I also own a couple of beauty pageant crowns, which I use for 'VideOkray.'

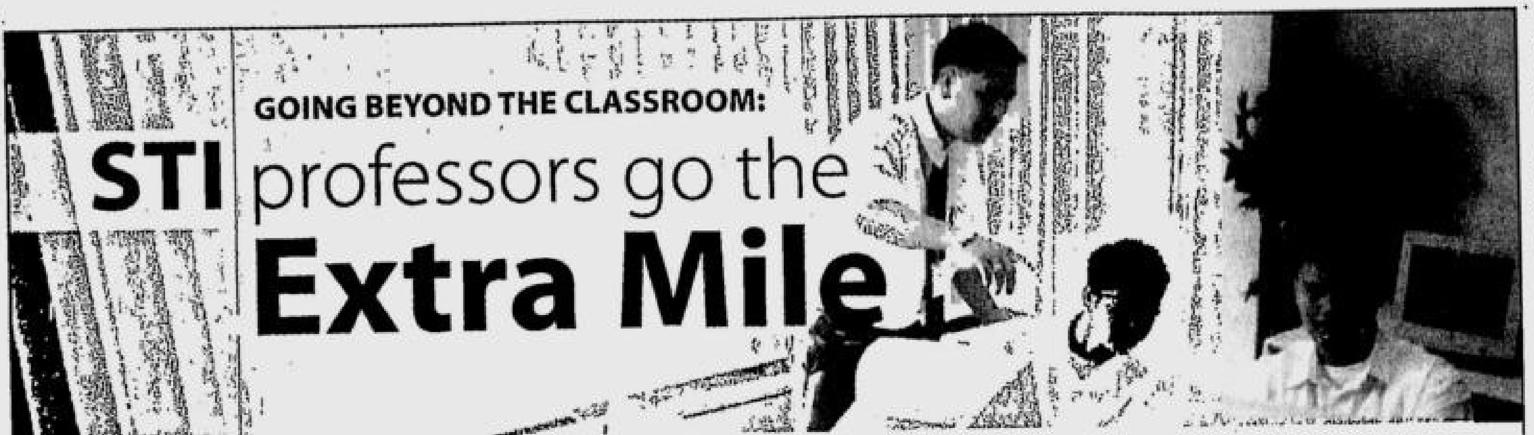
"I also have a couple of hairpieces. My old-

TERI/ A2-5

PONY-SKIN loafers, P150 from *ukay-ukay*



"ANG GANDA ko dito"



GOING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:

STI professors go the Extra Mile

During the 3rd STI National Academic Conference last year, three professors stood out among the rest and were conferred the title "Faculty with a Heart." The main criteria for this award included a professor's love for teaching as well as his interest in his students' well-being.

Professors are usually associated with homework, exams, lab work and theses. For students, professors usually take the fun out of being a teenager, giving long and tedious assignments that often take away what time would have been spent on weekend gimmicks. Student-professor relationships are often "professional" and rarely extends to the personal.

Not in STI. True, professors here still give students the usual homework, exams, lab work and theses. These are but basic to overall education, after all. What makes STI professors different, however, is the "extra" that they give: the parent-like treatment, the dialogues with students, and the genuine interest in their students' well-being. STI professors extend their work outside the classroom by actually being a part of their students' lives.

More than classroom learning. Ruel Masangcay of STI College Batangas is an educator who really excels in school. His appreciation for school during his student days has led him to the path he is treading now as a professor. Now the one responsible for molding young minds, Ruel is showing his students that school is not just about books, numbers and computers. It is about friendship and family. His teaching approach, one that incorporates genuine concern with routine classroom lessons, has earned him the honor of being called "Tatay" by his students.

Like Ruel, Ofelia Magtibay of STI College Lipa has also shown her students that the school can indeed be an extension of the home. Gifted with a real mother's heart, she usually extends her lectures outside the classroom by being an adviser and friend to her students. Ofelia often has one-on-one, heart-to-heart talks with her students, discussing anything and everything under the sun.

Talking to students inside and outside the classroom is one of the things that Anna Lee Bagulo of STI Edsa College Crossing does best. Described as an intelligent "self-starter," Anna usually initiates dialogues with her students. This way, she finds out what they expect to learn within the classroom while letting them know what she expects of them in return. This has made her a favorite among students.

Enhancing faculty competence. Hand in hand with STI professors' capacity to actually care for their students is their high degree of competence in their respective fields of teaching. STI makes sure that its professors, deans and academic heads from all over the Philippines are armed with the proper tools and know-how to produce world-class graduates.

One avenue that STI uses to achieve this goal is its three-day Academic Conference, which is composed of seminars and workshops that are aimed at updating the teaching knowledge, skills, management and methodologies of STI's faculty members. Here, experts from various fields, including the ICT and education sectors, gather to share their knowledge on a wide array of relevant topics.

"STI believes that learning is a continuous process and that our educators should also be subjected to constant retraining and retooling procedures for them to be able to impart relevant knowledge and up-to-date information to students," STI vice president for academics Ruel Virtucio said. *"Through the STI Academic Conference, our students are assured that we are providing quality education and that our instructors are delivering the lessons in an efficient, effective and relevant manner."*

Additional training. Apart from the Academic Conference, STI professors have to undergo various types of training to ensure that they are well equipped to fulfill their teaching duties. Courseware-based training is required of all professors as this prepares them to teach their courses and boosts their mastery of their respective subjects. Since STI already has a standard courseware and professors no longer have to put together their own lesson plans, the courseware-based training is conducted to make sure that they stay faithful to the STI courseware through and through.

ICT skills development, training for new courses and training on teaching skills are also conducted. The ICT skills training is specially designed to prepare thesis advisers in recommending programs or systems to their assigned thesis groups. Since they will be advising graduating students on what they have to do for their thesis, the professors themselves have to know the systems or programs that they will suggest. Before the start of each course, professors also have to train well for the new course before they teach. This ensures that they know by heart the subjects that they have been tasked to teach. The training on teaching skills serves to augment a professor's overall skills by having them undergo training on writing, teaching strategies and classroom assessment.

STI has also put in place the Operation Spoken English Environment Program (OSEEP), which aims to enhance the English proficiency of its faculty members and students. This is the school's answer to the government's call to strengthen the use of English as a medium of instruction.

To ensure that its faculty members are indeed ready to teach in STI schools all over the country, professors are required to go through these trainings, after which they will be given a Faculty Proficiency Certification. Professors with no such certification will not be allowed to teach in any STI school.

STI's rich training base is also supported by its philosophy that the entire school system is one big family. This family philosophy is what makes STI professors a cut above the rest.

Last year's Conference, composed of the Visayas and Mindanao, Southern Luzon and Southern Metro Manila and Northern Luzon and Northern Metro Manila legs, was attended by 161 academic heads and deans, 613 faculty members and 30 headquarter committee heads.

Some of STI's Faculty members and academic heads during last year's 3rd STI National Academic Conference.

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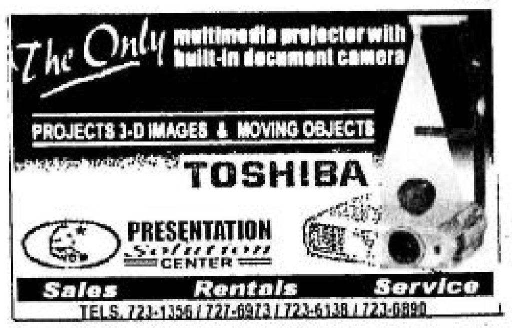
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High-risk bank promos alarm regulators

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANKING regulators are alarmed over high-risk deposit-taking schemes among a number of banks, which are now being investigated for possible violation of rules against unsafe and unsound practices.

In an interview at the sidelines of the recent Financial Sector Forum, Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. president Ricardo Tan said: "This is a quasi-pyramiding scheme using the PDIC as the fall guy institution, so we're trying to do something about it."

Tan said some banks that were offering "double your money" schemes—or about 20 percent a year for five years—might be putting themselves, and PDIC, at risk.

"We know definitely a number of banks that are doing this and we're concerned," he said.

"We're looking into the affiliates of banks that are doing the marketing because this may constitute unfair and unsound banking practice," Tan said.

Tan said that PDIC, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and even the Securities and Exchange Commission knew about the scheme and were trying to cooperate to find ways to curb these practices.

Asked why the PDIC thought it was similar to a pyramiding scheme, Tan said: "They will say, if you put in P2 million, then split it into several accounts, put them into time deposit and we'll give you goodies (in return): give you a car, give 20-percent (a year) interest. And for them to sustain this, they have to get more customers."

"In order for them to sustain this kind of activity, they have to keep on getting more and more customers. When the pyramid (collapses) like a house of cards, they know the PDIC is there," he said.

Once a reckless bank collapses due to these risky practices, he said PDIC would be the one obliged to pay off the insured depositors.

"We can't say that we won't pay the insured depositors, but we can look into the practices that are unsafe and unsound and see what we may have against the institutions that are undertaking these irregular practices," Tan said.

The PDIC chief said banking regulators were now studying ways on how to address the looming problem that might be caused by these bank practices.

Tan has been saying that the shutdown of at least seven thrift and rural banks so far this year, for instance, was "no joke" as it had resulted in costly settlements even if these were mostly small lenders.

PDIC has mapped out a strategy to shore up its reserves by at least P50 billion to boost its capital adequacy following the recent spate of costly bank failures. Its current deposit insurance fund of P40 billion was deemed insufficient to cover long-term risk probabilities.

"We've put in place a new sector called financial resources management and comptrollership sector and one of the core functions of this sector is to manage the deposit insurance fund on a more focused and professional basis, going away from mom-and-pop kind of operations," Tan said.

VAT delay costs gov't ₱167M a day

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has called on legislators to finally thresh out their opposing views on the value-added tax bill, saying delays in its enactment was costing the cash-strapped government some P167 million to P222 million in lost revenues a day.

Finance Assistant Secretary Gil Beltran said the government could not afford to lengthen the congressional debates over the VAT bill because the incremental revenues from the tax measure were needed to achieve the desired improvement in its fiscal standing.

The estimated daily revenue loss was based on the projected P60 billion to P80 billion in additional revenues a year should the VAT rate be raised to 12 percent and several exemptions be lifted.

The bicameral conference committee of Congress was deadlocked over what version of the VAT bill to pass. While the Lower House has already agreed with the Arroyo administration's proposal to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent, the Senate only wanted to lift several VAT exemptions and keep the rate at 10 percent.

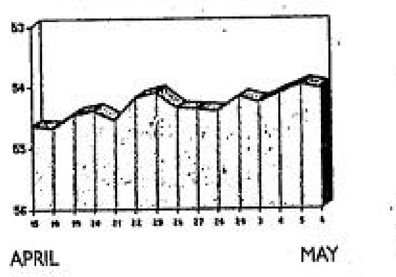
In an attempt to break the impasse, some legislators raised the idea of giving President Macapagal-Arroyo a

VAT/B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱54.030 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 6, 2005

¥104.75 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 6, 2005

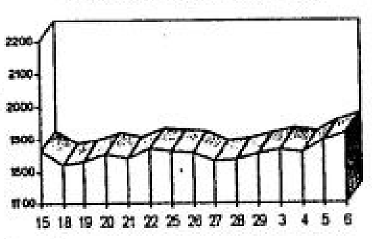
GOLD: $430.50-431.00
per ounce Hong Kong, May 6, 2005

May 8, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.771784	1.000000	53.9760
Japan	Yen	0.007391	0.009577	0.5169
United Kingdom	Pound	1.470634	1.905500	102.8513
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099051	0.128340	6.9273
Switzerland	Franc	0.646981	0.838293	45.2477
Canada	Dollar	0.620255	0.803665	43.3786
Singapore	Dollar	0.471981	0.611546	33.0088
Australia	Dollar	0.602297	0.780396	42.1227
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.047225	2.652590	143.1762
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205798	0.266652	14.3928
Brunei	Dollar	0.470543	0.609682	32.9082
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000081	0.000105	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019571	0.025358	1.3687
UAE	Dirham	0.210129	0.272264	14.6957
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.295700	69.9367
Argentina	Peso	0.266592	0.345423	18.6446
Brazil	Real	0.312463	0.404858	21.8526
Denmark	Kroner	0.134354	0.174083	9.3963
India	Rupee	0.017812	0.023079	1.2457
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.203128	0.263193	14.2061
Mexico	New Peso	0.070686	0.091588	4.9436
New Zealand	Dollar	0.566488	0.733999	39.6183
Norway	Kroner	0.123336	0.159806	8.6257
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012975	0.016812	0.9074
South Africa	Rand	0.129392	0.167653	9.0492
Korea	Won	0.000772	0.001000	0.0540
Sweden	Kroner	0.109149	0.141425	7.6336
Syria	Pound	0.014868	0.019264	1.0398
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024856	0.032206	1.7384
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000360	0.000466	0.0252

STOCK MARKET

Lackluster trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



ANALYSTS are divided as to what to expect from the market this week.

Some believe that higher oil prices and inflation, not to mention the continuing deadlock in the passage of a modified value-added tax bill in Congress, will clip the market's rise, but others feel that current bargain prices are too low to pass up.

Last week, the market climbed 59.1 points or 3.2 percent to finish at 1,913.77, so far its highest since April 13.

"I'm bullish on the market. I think it's already oversold," said Joey Roxas, president of Eagle Equities Inc.

BPI Trade said in its weekly stock market report that investors bought ahead of a generally expected better first quarter despite some companies warning of a bumpier ride in the coming quarters.

Large banks posted encouraging results in the period January to March.

Bank of the Philippine Islands reported its first-quarter net income rose 25 percent to P2 billion. Metrobank said its net income was P1.02 billion in the first quarter, or 53 percent higher than the year-ago level.

Semi-private Philippine National Bank (PNB) recorded net profit of P151 million while Security Bank Corp. said its net income rose 41 percent to P265 million. Union Bank said its net profits also soared 58 percent to P790.1 million.

Meanwhile, real-estate giant Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) said its recurring income grew 13.3 percent to P562 million. Mall operator SM Prime Holdings Inc. of mall tycoon Henry Sy Sr. also said it was optimistic over its first-quarter income performance.

Globe Telecom Inc. posted flat earnings of P3 billion for the first quarter. But PLDT also posted a 65-percent rise in the first-quarter profit to P9.36 billion aided by hefty gains from the foreign exchange. Piltel also posted a net profit of P2.2 billion for the first quarter, reversing its P21-million net loss from the previous year.

"We still think that the road ahead will be bumpy given the challenging environment. High oil prices and inflation will continue to weigh on the profitability of companies. Investors are also disappointed with the delay in the passage of the VAT bill, which is still pending in the bicameral conference committee," BPI Trade said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Pre-need sales down 18.4% in 1st quarter

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) said pre-need sales slumped 18.4 percent from January to March to P6.94 billion from P8.5 billion in the same period last year, with sales of pension and education plans leading the decline.

Sales of education plans fell 20 percent to P2.45 billion in the first quarter from P3.07 billion in the same period last year.

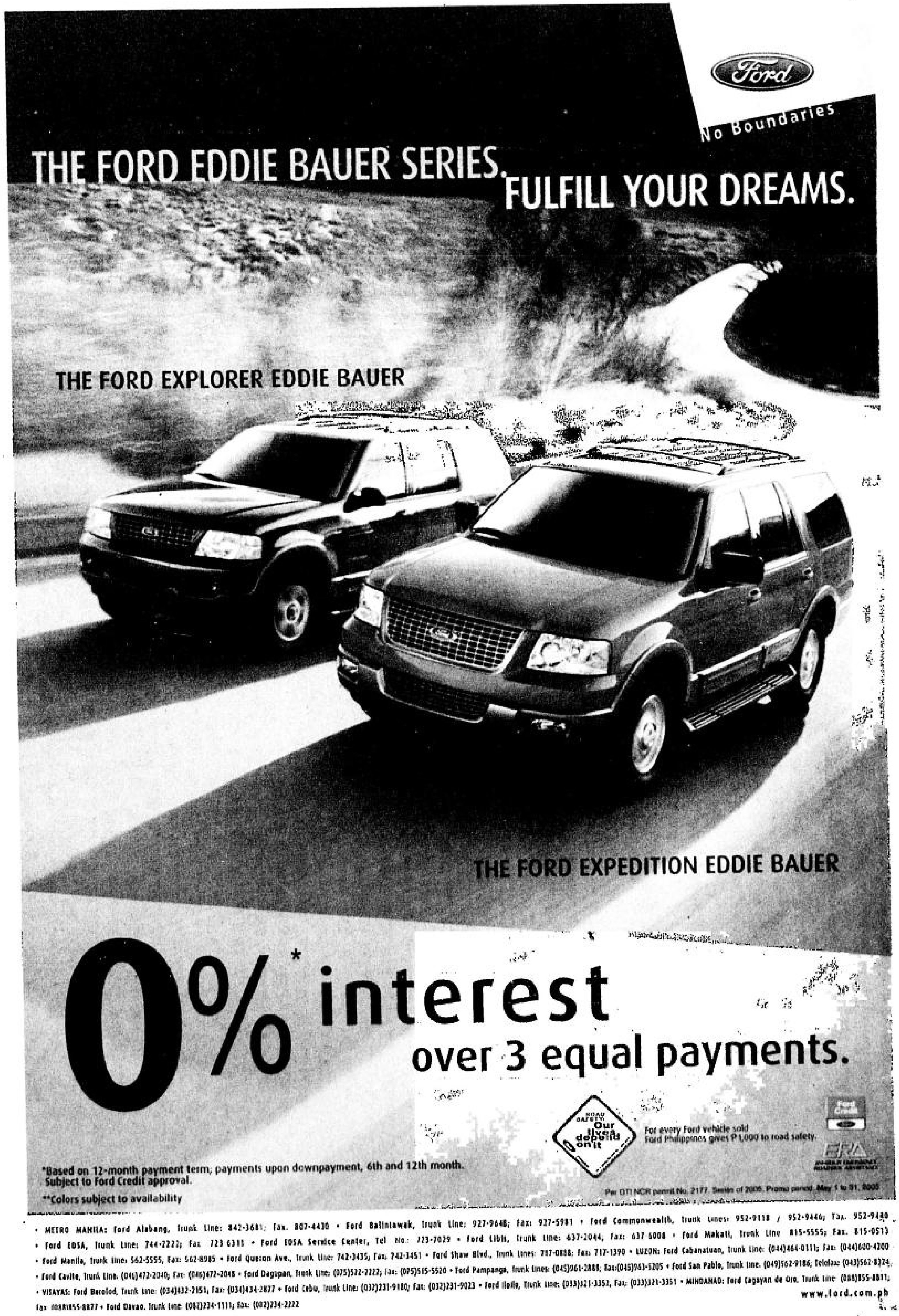
Pension plans sold also fell 40 percent to P2.86 billion from P4.76 billion in the same period last year. Only life plans bucked the decline, growing 140.8 percent in the first quarter to P1.62 billion from P674 million.

The number of plans sold in the first quarter also dropped 8.5 percent to roughly 107,000 due to the drop in volumes of pension and education plans.

For March alone, total plans sold fell 16.8 percent to P2.54 billion against the same month last year. Sales of education plans shrank 31 percent to P776.8 million while sales of pension plans slipped 25 percent to P1.25 billion. However, sales of life plans soared 102 percent to P510.97 million. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

INTEREST RATES

May 06, 2005-MART1 Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART 1 6-May-05	MART 1 5-May-05
1 Month	6.4783	6.5143
3 Months	6.5857	6.6696
6 Months	7.6054	7.6429
1 Year	8.5946	8.6071
2 Years	9.45	9.49
3 Years	10.5036	10.5268
4 Years	11.0483	11.09
5 Years	11.4	11.41
7 Years	11.65	11.6583
10 Years	12.115	12.0983
20 Years	12.4967	12.485
25 Years	12.78	12.78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NEXT 3-4 YEARS

JG Summit allots $1B for capex

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc., the flagship company of taipan John Gokongwei, Jr. is spending at least $1 billion over the next three to four years mainly on its petrochemical, airline and telecommunications businesses.

JG Summit president and chief operating officer Lance Gokongwei estimated that $400 million would be spent on the purchase of new airplanes for Cebu Pacific Air over the next two years, $450 million on a naptha cracker plant, $200 million on projects of Digital Telecommunications Inc., P3 billion for branded food and beverage firm Universal Robina Corp. (URC), and roughly P2 billion on the expansion of malls and other property projects of Robinsons Land Corp.

Guarantee

Gokongwei added that JG Summit would try to secure guarantees from export credit agencies for bank loans that would fund the telecommunications, airline and petrochemical projects. The rest of the funding will come from cash generated from operations.

JG Summit spent about P10 billion last year for capital expenditures.

URC is taking a break from its aggressive bid to be a key player in Southeast Asia and China with no new investments lined up in other countries in Asia.

"We are stopping at Vietnam. (URC) has no current plans for other countries," Gokongwei said.

URC currently operates in seven countries: Thailand (wafers, biscuits and candies); Singapore (potato chips); Indonesia (candies); Hong Kong (potato chips, salty snacks); Malaysia (potato chips, coated nuts, chocolates); China (bottled water, snacks and candies), and Vietnam, its latest expansion site.

Vietnam foray

URC is investing roughly $15 million for its new factory in Vietnam that is slated to be opened this month. Gokongwei added that URC was focused on building its Thailand and Indonesian operations where it is a leader in wafers, biscuits and candies.

RLC is expanding its Robinsons malls in Lipa, Batangas, and Dasmariñas, Cavite.

It operates 18 malls with a gross floor area of 1.1 million square meters. It opened three malls this year in Angeles, Pampanga; Bacolod, Negros Occidental, and in Pioneer, Mandaluyong. Last year, it opened its Lipa and Cainta malls.

RLC estimates its capital expenditures could go up to P3.5 billion to P4 billion this year as it expands its mixed-use complexes such as in Robinsons Pioneer and in Robinsons Complex in Ermita, Manila, and continue with the construction of high-rise buildings such as One Gateway Residences in Mandaluyong and One Adriatico Residences in Manila.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 6, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.7	17,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28	28.5	27.5	27.5	275,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	50.5	49	50.5	1,844,700
China Banking Corp.	680	770	680	770	3,770
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.69	960,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	47	47	47	33,500
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	58,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	33.5	32.5	33.5	1,054,200
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	16,060
Philippine National Bank	30.5	31.5	30.5	31.5	50,000
Phil. Savings Bank	33	33	32	32	5,200
Security Bank Corp.	27	27	27	27	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	27	26	26.5	83,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	280	280	280	280	200
Manulife Financial Corp.	2470	2470	2470	2470	50
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1.02	1	1.02	46,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1665	1685	1665	1685	2,830
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	10,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.14	3,161,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	835	830	835	27,620
Ipeople Inc.	4	4.05	4	4.05	105,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	1,800,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.35	3.25	3.35	6,260,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1415	1425	1410	1415	139,500
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.67	40,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	3,200,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17	16.75	16.75	9,500
Manila Electric Co. B	23.75	24.5	23.75	24	1,082,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	4,475,000
Petron Corp.	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.55	4,192,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	124,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	276,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	115,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	600,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.64	0.67	0.64	0.67	1,210,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	1,640,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.45	470,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	10,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	29	28	28	113,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57	58	157,600
San Miguel Corp. B	83.5	84	83	84	94,400
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	171,200
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7	7.1	7	7.1	2,781,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	5,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	7,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	250,000
APC Group Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	620,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	22,000,000
Aries Prime Res. Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.06	1	1	10,711,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	90,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.225	1,250,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.34	5,810,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.55	2.55	528,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	5,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	248,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.1	8.4	8.1	8.1	343,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	47	48	47	48	635,400
House of Investments Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	160,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	6,747,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.14	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.37	0.38	35,010,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	600,000
SM Investments Corp.	250	250	249	250	170,170
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	5,420,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	10,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	1,120,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.22	1,000,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.48	1.5	3,026,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	1,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	28,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8	8.2	8	8.1	12,294,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.27	2,690,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	24,580,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.48	1.58	1.48	1.56	6,682,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	80,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.1	5.3	4.95	5	600,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	7,299,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	35,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5	5	4.95	4.95	143,000
Benguet Corp. A	10.25	10.25	9.8	9.8	102,400
Benguet Corp. B	50	50	50	50	700
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.33	2,980,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,730,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	34,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	64,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	480,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	33	33	33	33	653,200
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	5,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	1,500,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	180,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	16,457,110	710,996,225.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	143,969,690	489,378,770.00
PRO	54,775,000	178,042,770.00
Mining	148,094,300	30,038,750.00
OIL	9,680,000	358,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	372,976,100	1,408,814,515.00
Bank & Fin Svc	564.23	UP 14.35
Comm'l & Ind'l	3,001.37	UP 22.79
PRO	727.59	UP 15.55
Mining	2,768.22	DOWN 3.51
OIL	2.45	DOWN 0.01
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,171.94	UP 11.90
Composite	1,913.77	UP 20.57

NO. OF ADVANCES: 42, NO. OF DECLINES: 20, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 45, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 107, NO. OF TRADES: 2,909

VAT delay costs gov't . . .

From page B1

standby authority to raise the VAT rate to 12 percent only if a certain fiscal target is not met. The target, however, is to be agreed upon by senators and congressmen.

The DOF said the deliberations over the VAT bill should be expedited as the tax measure was closely being watched by foreign investors. Delays could cause jitters among them and eventually lead to capital flight, it warned.

While the DOF welcomed the idea of giving the President a standby authority, the agency said it was still better if the VAT rate would be raised to 12 percent because this would surely raise the much-needed revenues for the government.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan said the DOF was keeping its stand for the need to raise the VAT rate to 12 percent and that the agency was trying to keep its optimism that Congress would adopt the executive branch's proposal.

"The fiscal problem is staring us now right in the face, so we need to make an action now," Beltran said in an interview with reporters.

He also proposed that legislators approve the 12-percent VAT rate now, and then give the President the authority to roll the rate back to 10 percent once the government's fiscal standing improves.

He suggested that the President could roll back the rate when the national government's budget deficit is reduced to only one percent of gross domestic product. Last year, the deficit-to-GDP ratio stood at 3.8 percent.

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Kasambagan, Cebu City 6000, Philippines

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of **ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES, INC.**, will be held on 16 May 2005 at 4:00 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom of Cebu City Marriott Hotel, Cebu Business Park, Cebu City.

The Agenda of the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Notice of Meeting
3. Determination of Quorum
4. Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Stockholders' Meeting of 17 May 2004
5. Presentation of the President's Report
6. Approval of Annual Report and Financial Statements
7. Ratification of the Acts, Resolutions and Proceedings of the Board of Directors, Corporate Officers and Management up to 16 May 2005
8. Election of External Auditors
9. Election of Board of Directors
10. Other Business
11. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record at the close of business on 31 March 2005 are entitled to notice and to vote at this meeting. Registration will start at 2:00 p.m. and will end at 4:00 p.m. Kindly present any proof of identification, such as driver's license, passport, company I.D. or SSS/GSIS I.D. Aside from personal identification, representatives of corporate stockholders and other entities should also present a duly sworn secretary's certificate or a similar document showing his or her authority to represent the corporation or entity.

Should you be unable to attend the meeting, you may want to execute a proxy in favor of a representative. In accordance with the amended By-laws of the Corporation, proxies must be presented to the Secretary for inspection, validation and record at least seven (7) days prior to the opening of the stockholders' meeting.

For those unable to attend the Stockholders' Meeting in Cebu, a Stockholders' Briefing will be conducted in Manila on 18 May 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at Rizal Ballroom A, Makati Shangri-la Hotel, Makati City.

For the Board of Directors.

(sgd) **M. JASMINE S. OPORTO**
Corporate Secretary

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   - Analyzing Investment Options
   - Assessing Business Risk
3. Finance and Stability
   - Matching Financing to Investments
   - Structuring Capital Requirements
   - Assessing Financial Risk
4. Control and Performance Steering
   - Analyzing Information Needs
   - Setting up Management Control System
   - Business Game

Other Entrepreneurship Course Offerings in May to June 2005

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High Growth Strategies During Low Growth Times
June 20-22, 2005

Entrepreneurship in Distribution
June 14-16, to June 21-22 , 2005

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Understanding inflation

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

THE LATEST word on inflation that came out last week hasn't been particularly encouraging; price increases show no signs of slowing down. For the third month in a row, the inflation rate has not abated at 8.5 percent, measured on a year-on-year basis, with the January rate only slightly lower at 8.4 percent. Since we are already into the second quarter and nearing completion of the first half of the year, the government's target of 5-6 percent average inflation for the year is now unlikely to be achieved; Ateneo's 7-8 percent forecast appears much more realistic.

What it means

Inflation is the sustained increase in the general price level. The inflation rate measures how fast overall prices are rising. Thus, an 8.5-percent annual inflation rate tells us that what you were able to buy for P100 last year would now cost you P108.50. As Neda chief in the 1990s, I would occasionally get peeved by columnists or radio commentators who would call me a liar whenever I announced a drop in the inflation rate. Their line would usually be, "How can Mr. Habito claim that inflation is down when prices keep going up?" But a lower inflation rate never meant prices are going down! It means that prices are in fact still going up, but more slowly (i.e. at a lower rate) than before. If prices were in fact going down, it would no longer be called inflation, but deflation. In this case, the inflation rate would not only be lower, it would be negative. A good situation to have, you might say—but economists and businessmen actually fear deflation just about as much as they do high rates of inflation. Japan, for one, had experienced episodes of deflation in recent years, and they were not all that happy about it. The problem with dropping prices is that it means there is not enough demand for the economy's given level of production, forcing producers to accept lower prices, and cut down on production, on jobs, and eventually on people's incomes and ability to buy their products. Left unchecked, it could turn into a downward spiral in the economy and a full-blown recession. So don't pray for negative inflation or deflation; pray, rather, that it simply stays close to zero. In fact, we don't want it to be zero either, as a little inflation is useful for stimulating increased production.

How it is measured

When Neda Secretary Neri or NSCB Secretary-General Virola (both of whom are named Romulo, coincidentally) reports an 8.5 percent inflation rate, they are describing an average rate of price increase. Prices of some products or services rise faster than others; some may in fact go down while others go up. The average itself is a weighted average, taken over a defined set of products and services --from 285 to 705 of them, depending on the province—considered to comprise the normal purchases (consumption basket) of an average Filipino household. Food products make up over half (55.1 percent) of the average household budget, with rice being the largest single item, accounting for about 11 percent, housing and repairs 14.7 percent, clothing 3.7 percent, and so on. The number widely quoted is the year-on-year inflation rate; that is, the announced April rate measures how prices rose from April 2004 to April 2005. One can also look at the month-on-month rate, i.e. the rate of increase from the previous month. This is actually a more informative measure as it tells us what the short-term trends are like. Because of this, other countries (including the US, Japan) prefer to report their inflation rates based on the annualized month-on-month rate, after correcting for seasonality.

Why it happens

Inflation can either come from a demand pull or a supply push. When the central bank puts too much money in circulation relative to production in the economy, too much money ends up chasing too few goods (i.e. too much demand), leading their prices to rise. That is why governments cannot simply print money indiscriminately, especially to pay their bills. When some irresponsible Latin American governments did so in the 1970s, they ended up with hyperinflation, at rates over 1000 percent. Housewives literally waited outside factory gates at payday to grab their husbands' wages and spend them right away, as prices would go up by the hour! Governments now know better; monetary authorities allow money supply to grow only to the extent that real production grows.

On the other hand, supply push inflation arises from rising production costs due to such factors as higher wage rates, rising energy prices, and a depreciating currency which raises the cost of imported inputs. This is the kind of inflation we are seeing lately, and unfortunately don't have as much control over.

Gainers and losers

.Not everybody is hurt by inflation. In general, those who earn fixed wages and salaries—and that means half of the workers in our economy—get hurt by inflation because their wages rarely catch up with the rates of increase in prices. On the other hand, gainers include owners of businesses whose products go up in price faster than their costs rise. Lenders of money also lose while borrowers gain, particularly when the inflation rate exceeds the interest rate on the loan. This implies that the borrower actually pays back money with lower value than what was originally borrowed.

Part of the reason we borrowed so much from abroad in the 1970s was that it was arguably foolish not to do so. When the global banks were up to their ears with deposits of Opec's billions of petrodollars looking for a place to be invested, the banks were pushing cheap loans to poor countries at rates even below prevailing inflation rates. It was like they were paying countries to borrow their money! Little wonder that a lot of irresponsible loans were contracted, leading to massive defaults that had led to the Third World debt problem that plagues the world to this very day. Guess how much of it is ours? *Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*

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BIR readies seminars for self-employed taxpayers, professionals

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue said it would roll out a program to educate professionals and other self-employed individuals with their tax obligations, a move intended to plug revenue leakages arising partly from their ignorance of tax-related duties.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said the BIR would start its program with members of the show business industry. She said the BIR had agreed with the Kapisanan ng mga Artista ng Pelikulang Pilipino at Telebisyon that the revenue agency would conduct a tax forum among its estimated 400 members.

The forum aims to promote awareness among professionals and self-employed individuals of the taxes they have to pay, the deadlines of the remittances of the taxes, and the financial reports they have to regularly submit to the BIR to avoid being charged with tax evasion.

The BIR found it necessary to conduct a tax forum among celebrities following the perceived rampant tax evasion among members of the show business industry. The BIR said it had a list of more than 200 celebrities with questionable tax compliance records and would thus be subject to BIR investigation.

After conducting the forum among celebrities, Henares said the BIR would arrange similar forums among organizations of other self-employed individuals like medical practitioners, legal professionals, and professional basketball players.

Henares said the program would give self-employed individuals the opportunity to rectify their tax remittances if ever they failed to fully comply with their tax obligations in the past.

But Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said that the BIR's awareness campaign would not prevent the revenue agency from filing charges against tax delinquent individuals.

If an individual does not want to face tax evasion charges, then he or she should rectify inaccuracies in his or her past tax payments before the BIR finds out about it. Parayno said that if the revenue agency finds out the tax delinquency before the individual fixes errors in his or her tax payments, then the BIR would pursue the filing of tax evasion charges.

Parayno said the BIR would no longer entertain settlements with individuals or companies caught evading taxes.

He said that previously, the BIR was amenable to compromise arrangements that led to easier collection of taxes.

"But obviously that policy did not work because it sent the wrong signal that one can easily get away with tax evasion charges. So now, once you're caught, then you will have to face the full force of the law," Parayno said in a press briefing.

He said quite a number of celebrities were charged with the BIR in the past but their cases were settled through a compromise. But Parayno said some of them remained tax delinquents, knowing that they could easily settle their cases once caught.

The tax awareness campaign will complement the BIR's RATE (run after tax evaders) program, under which the revenue agency and the Department of Finance file tax evasion charges against known businesses or celebrities. The objective of RATE is to discourage the public from tax evasion by showing them that the government does not hold anyone sacred.

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TVI Resource to invest ₱563M

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A FILIPINO-CANADIAN joint venture is shelling out P563 million to produce dore bullion or ingots of an impure alloy of silver or gold in Zamboanga del Norte, the Department of Trade and Industry said.

Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said in a press briefing that TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc., which is 60-percent Filipino and 40-percent Canadian, was holding a mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) that covered about 508 hectares.

TVIRD also holds an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the MPSA serve as permits that allow foreign companies to engage in local mining projects.

Santos said TVIRD's decision was prompted by the Supreme Court's decision issued last December, which allowed foreign mining firms to operate in the country.

The decision also resulted in the renewed interest from the global mining community in the local mining industry.

The trade chief said TVIRD was looking at attaining a yearly production capacity of about 979,000 ounces of dore bullion, or about 31,400 ounces of gold and 948,000 ounces of silver.

The new venture is expected to create 425 new jobs for direct and indirect hires including administrative workers.

"The DTI has identified the mining industry as among the priority sectors that are being given focused support because of its great potential to attract substantial investments," Santos said.

He added that the DTI was pushing for a more streamlined and time-bound processing of mining permits, clearances and certifications from various concerned agencies to hasten the approval of pending applications.

Santos said this would be done while ensuring that only environmentally compliant as well as economically and socially sound projects would be approved and that mining operators have the support of the communities where they intended to locate.

Experts estimate that the country's deposits of explored and identified metallic and nonmetallic minerals are valued at a total of $956 billion or about P52 trillion.

Of the country's nine million hectares of mineralized land, only 1.4 percent or 420,000 hectares are covered by mining permits, which means about 8.6 million hectares more of mineral-laden land are waiting to be explored.

The DTI, together with the DENR and the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, has launched a series of roadshows in different parts of the world, which have so far chalked up P8 billion in investment commitments.

In 2003, the mining industry contributed P41.5 billion in productive value, P17.9 billion in value-added contribution and $638 million in exports. The sector also provided at least 104,000 jobs for direct hires.

P1.5B FOR 3 SMDC PROJECTS
SM Development Corp. chair Henry Sy Sr. (center) and son vice chair Henry T. Sy Jr. (left) exchange pleasantries with director Octavio V. Espiritu during the company's stockholders' meeting at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. The company said it was earmarking P1.5 billion this year for three projects—the Chateau Elysee in Parañaque, the NorthPointe Residences in SM North Edsa area, and the phase 1 of the residential, sports and leisure beach community venture in Hacienda Looc, Batangas.

The expanded senior citizens law

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

EDUARDO Zialcita, PhD, the representative of Parañaque City, is one reason (there are more) why Congress should not be abolished, as proposed by my good friend, retired general Fortunato Abat, among others.

Zialcita is the principal author of the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003 (RA 9357, amending RA 7532). Not content with getting an excellent law enacted, Zialcita now heads the oversight subcommittee that tracks down whether the law is being followed or not.

In the hearing to which I was invited, various government agencies (such as the DTI, SSS, GSIS, Philhealth) and private sector groups, such as the drugstores association, submitted their compliance reports. Senior citizens groups, such as the Philippine Association of Retired Persons, were asked whether they had any complaints.

Zialcita now says that his subcommittee has determined 90 percent compliance of the law, so far.

Basically, Zialcita's law broadens the scope of the 20-percent discount system beyond just the drugstores, hospitals and restaurants. But the constitutionality of the 20-percent discount on drugs and medicine has been challenged at the Supreme Court by five small drugstores. That case is shaping up to be one big brawl. In the meantime, Zialcita rightly insists, the law has to be followed. And, anybody who disagrees with the law should take his case to court.

Another point of conflict at the hearings was the nature of the discount. Is it a tax credit or a tax discount? The discussion among accountants was beyond me, and I could not help but doze off.

To me, the biggest benefit under the Zialcita law is the elimination of the senior citizen's card. Instead of the card, a driver's license or passport, or any similar document, is acceptable. In the restaurant I go to, the cashier no longer asks me for my ID.

Under the old law, a senior citizen (age 60 and over) was entitled to an ID (and the corresponding benefits) if he earned no more than P60,000 a year. The card proclaimed to the whole world that the holder was poor. It was a blow to a senior citizen's self-respect, and became a virtual begging bowl.

The ID under the old law resulted in serious iniquities. The wife who stayed home because she had a rich or well-paid husband qualified for an ID. A retired public school teacher with a pension of over P60,000 a year did not.

Finally, the old ID became a political tool. If you had the right connections, you could get the ID at city hall, no matter what your financial standing was.

While I commend Zialcita and his subcommittee, I cannot but help feel leery over the shape of things. Congress passes laws, and the executive department enforces them. But when Congress sees the need for an oversight committee to check whether a law is being implemented or not, is that not a measure of the executive department's efficiency?

Zialcita's subcommittee has set up The Edza Senior Citizens Complaints and Action Coordinating Center. District Address: Unit 2S-33. 2F Pearl Plaza Mall, Quirino Avenue, Tambo, Parañaque City. Office address: Rm. 408, R.V. Mitra Building, House of Representatives, Quezon City. Hotline numbers: Landline No. 879-3163. Fax No. 951-8923/879-3157.

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,100,000	1,000,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	1,050,000
Baguio Country Club	575,000	550,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	170,000	-
Canlubang	-	470,000
Canyon Woods	140,000	-
Capitol Hills	95,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	1,600,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	100,000
Club Filipino	150,000	100,000
Eagleridge "A"	200,000	180,000
Eagleridge "C"	300,000	-
Fairways "C3"	-	300,000
Forest Hills "A"	140,000	100,000
Forest Hills "B"	200,000	180,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	240,000	190,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	11,500,000	Please Call
Manila Golf (Individual)	11,400,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,050,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	400,000	350,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	700,000
Manila Yacht Club	400,000	300,000
Metroclub "A"	150,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	100,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	300,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	220,000	180,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	300,000	180,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	150,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	450,000	350,000
Quezon City Sports Club	140,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	500,000
Sta. Elena "A"	-	1,150,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	170,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	100,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	-
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	-
Valley Golf	300,000	230,000
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Alta Vista A/B*	350,000	-
Baguio Country Club	Pls. Call	480,000
Calatagan Golf	60,000	-
Camp John Hay	Pls. Call	-
Canyon Woods	140,000	-
Capitol Hills	100,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	-
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	Pls. Call	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	200,000/290,000*/Pls. Call**	-
Eastridge A/B*	130,000	85,000*
Evercrest	70,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/260,000**	110,000/160,000*
Luisita Golf	310,000	-
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	11,500,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	-
Manila Polo	Pls. Call	2,000,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls. Call*	300,000/700,000*
Makati Sports Club	210,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	100,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	-	300,000*
Mt. Malarayat A/C**	190,000	150,000/300,000**
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/320,000*	160,000/270,000*/340,000**
Puerto Azul	60,000	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	-
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000/150,000*	180,000**
Riviera Sports	45,000	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	75,000/110,000*/160,000**	-
Splendido	-	250,000
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,200,000/1,600,000*	1,100,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	Pls. Call	370,000
Tagaytay Highlands	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
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Capitol Hills "A"	90K	
Celebrity Sports Club		100K
Club Filipino		90K
Club Punta Fuego		450K
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	200K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	290K	
Eastridge Golf Club "A"	100K	
Eastridge Golf Club "B"		150K
Makati Sports Club "A"	190K	
Manila Polo Club	please call	
Manila Southwoods "A"		300K
Manila Southwoods "B"		700K
Metro Club "A"		90K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	170K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"		290K
Orchard Golf Club "C"		350K
Riviera Golf Club "B"		150K
Rockwell Club	290K	
Royal Tagaytay		60K
Spa & Lodge	650K	-
Sherwood Hills "A"	80K	-
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.3M	
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Philippine National Bank

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 24, 2005 at 6:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 25, 2004
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2004
5. Approval of the 2004 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 25, 2004 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 25, 2005 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a PROXY to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2005. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20, 2005, 9:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 4, 2005

(SGD.) RENATO J. FERNANDEZ
Corporate Secretary

NOTICE TO PWU-JASMS COMMUNITY AND THE PUBLIC

Our Clients, **UNLAD RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (Unlad) and PHILIPPINE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY (PWU)** take exception to the current publications in various dailies announcing the intention of Jardine Land Inc. (JLI) to obtain immediate possession of the real property registered in the name of Unlad located along EDSA. The publications were released at the instance of JLI amidst on-going negotiation towards an amicable settlement.

Please take notice that the validity of the foreclosure sale of the aforesaid property conducted on September 12, 2002 is being assailed by PWU and Unlad in Civil Case No. 69405 pending with the Regional Trial Court of Pasig, Branch 71. JLI cannot take possession without the issue of validity of the foreclosure sale being first finally settled. Besides, contrary to the impression being imparted to the public by JLI; the foreclosure sale affects only about the one (1) hectare of the whole property and the classrooms affected can be easily relocated to the remaining lots owned by PWU in the event possession will be transferred in favor of JLI by final judgement of the court.

School operation continues and "BUSINESS AS USUAL" remains.

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By: ATTY. ARNEL D. NAIDAS

Digitel says link-up with Smart still problematic

By Clarissa S. Batino

INTERCONNECTION woes between Sun Cellular and Smart Communications Inc. are persisting, according to Digitel Mobile Philippines Inc.

Digitel Mobile is a unit of Gokongwei-owned Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc., which uses Sun Cellular as its trade name.

Sun Cellular had been complaining that calls and text messages from its network to Smart have been failing since March. Latest Digitel tests conducted in late April and just last week still showed that 89 percent of calls from Sun to Smart failed to connect.

Smart, for its part, challenged Digitel to submit itself to a third-party testing as earlier proposed. Smart said it was willing to help fund such a network audit and even Globe Telecom Inc. said it was agreeable to the plan.

Digitel said that tests done on calls from Sun Cellular to Smart from 6 a.m. of April 28 to 6 a.m. of April 29 showed that 89 percent failed "due to no circuit available." Of the 1.08 million Sun-to-Smart calls, 965,098 failed, according to the Gokongwei firm.

On the other hand, of the 286,075 calls from Sun to Globe Telecom Inc., only 489 failed.

Of the 64,279 Sun-to-Smart calls from 12 midnight to 6 am of April 29, 57,244 or 89 percent failed whereas the failure rate of Sun to Globe calls remained at a minimal 0.07 percent of 16,758 calls made during the same period.

A similar test was done from 6 a.m. of May 2 to 6 a.m. of May and from 12 midnight to 6 a.m. of May 3. The results were the same, according to Digitel.

"Smart is reiterating our challenge that an independent test be conducted by a third party in order to verify the conflicting claims being made regarding the network performance of all operators," said Smart spokesperson Mon Isberto.

Smart's head of legal Rogelio Quevedo raised the idea of a third-party network audit last month, but only Globe agreed to join the plan.

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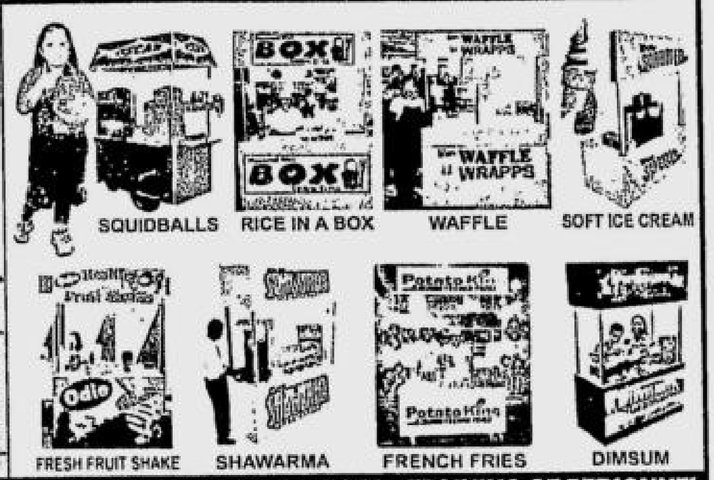

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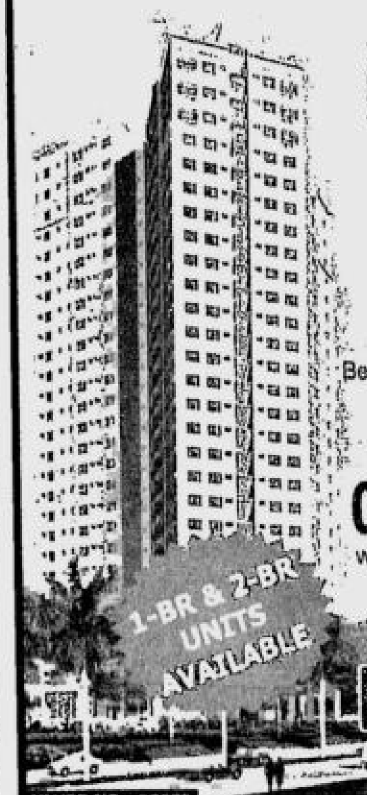

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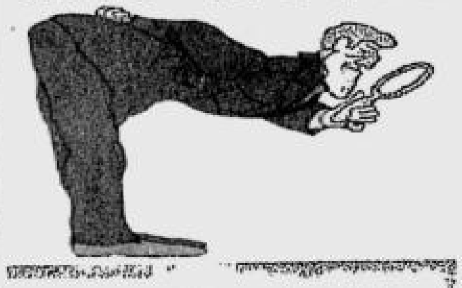

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L300 AF	535,000	72,000	21,102	15,034	10,515
L300 WT	557,000	76,400	21,970	15,652	10,947
L300 PET	559,000	76,800	22,049	15,708	10,987

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50% D/P	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
290,000	24,167	16,111	12,083	9,016	7,230	6,300
303,500	25,292	16,861	12,646	9,323	7,476	6,520
310,000	25,833	17,222	12,917	9,551	7,659	6,680
267,500	22,292	14,861	11,146	8,225	6,596	5,763
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279,500	23,292	15,528	11,646	8,647	6,934	6,048

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45-hectare Navy property in Fort Boni up for development

THE PHILIPPINE Navy is set to transform its 44.7-hectare property in Fort Bonifacio into a mixed-use residential-commercial area.

The project, which is estimated to cost P9.5 billion, is aimed at providing housing for the Navy personnel and, at the same, generating revenue for the Armed Forces Modernization Program.

Navy chief Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon said the Navy was talking to various financial institutions and major property developers for advice and assistance in the preparation of the project's masterplan.

The project is slated for ground-breaking this year.

De Leon said the project would create some 4,000 housing units, of which 3,000 were for enlisted men and 1,000 for officers who have at least three remaining years of active Naval service.

The project will reduce the housing backlog within the Navy, De Leon said. At least 12 hectares would be set aside for the Navy housing.

De Leon said that under the proposed development scheme, the prospective developer could be given 32 hectares for commercial development under a 99-year usufruct arrangement. The developer, in turn, will construct the housing component of the project.

The property would revert to the Navy after the usufruct period.

De Leon said the Navy envisions the rise of virtually self-contained communities within the housing portion of the proposed project. He said the housing clusters would have appropriate open spaces, playgrounds and other vital common facilities.

The prospective developer will be given a freehand to choose the development concept for the commercial component of the project.

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REGIONAL EXPANSION

FirstPac plans to buy 2 telcos

By Clarissa S. Batino

HONG KONG'S First Pacific Co. Ltd., the single-biggest owner of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., is considering two regional telecom companies for acquisition, said company managing head Manuel Pangilinan.

Pangilinan, who is also chair of PLDT, said this was in line with the company's regional expansion strategy.

As for PLDT, he said the telecom giant was still trying to determine whether a plan to invest about $85 million in a planned joint venture with American firm Echostar Communications Inc. would be viable.

"There are several opportunities for First Pacific in the areas of telecom, consumer products and infrastructure. One or two telcos in the region are up for grabs," he said without identifying the companies.

Also, Pangilinan said he was no longer interested in San Miguel Corp., saying it was a case of "love lost." Before acquiring a 24.3-percent of PLDT in 1998, First Pacific was originally targeting the food and beverage conglomerate.

First Pacific, a company that Pangilinan founded in the early 80s using the capital of Indonesia's Salim family, has been expanding in the region through telecom or food businesses.

Last year, it added Philippine infrastructure projects on its plate of investment possibilities.

Among the projects that have reportedly caught the interest of First Pacific in the Philippines were the expressways in Southern and Northern Luzon, and the privatization of the state-owned power transmission company.

In the meantime, the PLDT-Echostar plan will involve the setting up of a 60-40 joint venture that will engage in direct-to-home broadcast business the satellite technology of the American firm.

PLDT intends to use internal funds to finance its investment in the direct-to-home broadcast business. "We don't need to borrow for this investment," said the PLDT chair.

As of end-March, PLDT said its cash had grown to P11.3 billion from P9.7 billion a year ago. PLDT first explored a possible joint venture with Echostar in 2000 but this did not materialize.

Echostar is a 24-year-old company that specializes in direct broadcast satellite, claiming to be the first to offer a satellite receiver for less than $200.

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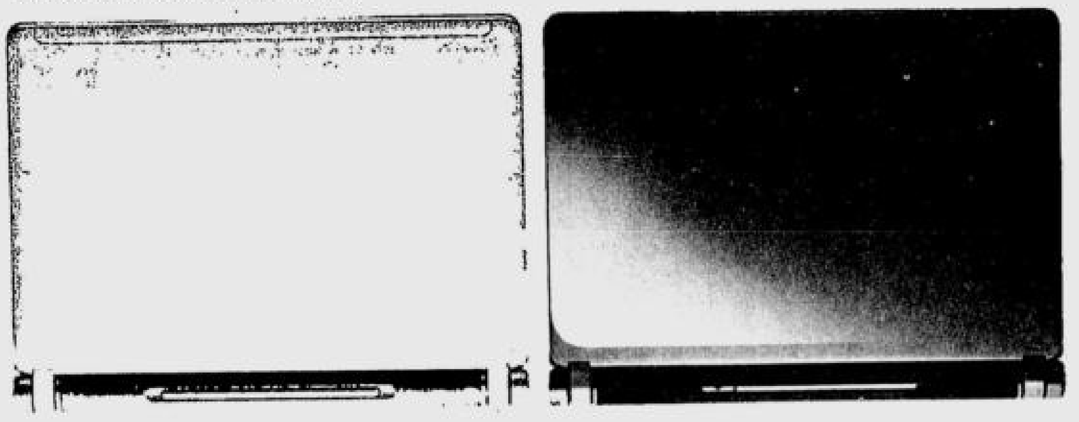

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MWSS to tap $31-M loan for Maynilad

By Christine A. Gaylican

METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) will tap a $31-million loan from the World Bank for Maynilad Water Services Inc.'s debt servicing requirement.

This was provided in the proposed rehabilitation plan for Maynilad which was awaiting court approval.

According to Section 11 of the Debt and Capital Restructuring Agreement among the parties (Maynilad, MWSS and the creditors), the water concessionaire will make upfront payments worth P1.6 billion to creditors upon the approval of the rehabilitation plan.

These are foreign creditors BNP Paribas and Duetsche Bank AG; the group of banks that provided the standby letter of credit or the SBLC banks; local banks Development Bank of the Philippines, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and East West Banking Corp., and French partner Lyonnaise Asia Water (Holdings) Pte. Ltd. (formerly Ondeo and the Suez Group).

The rehabilitation plan noted that the $31-million loan would be paid by 2013. Under the plan, the state-run MWSS will commit to a debt-for-equity swap arrangement with Maynilad and take up an 84-percent equity in the company.

The nongovernment group Action for Economic Reforms criticized this part of the plan saying this would be unfavorable to the MWSS and to the taxpayers, who will eventually shoulder the debt burden.

"The Lopez Group's Benpres Holdings Inc. still walks away free of its guarantees. The French represented by Suez retains the same ending exposure in Maynilad. The banks that provided the $120-million performance bond gets an upfront payment, although a little less," pointed AER lawyer Nepomuceno Malaluan.

Malalaun explained that although the MWSS would not touch the proceeds of the $120-million performance bond, the MWSS would be constrained to forego receipt of concession fees to pay for the shares it would subscribe to. It also would be increasing its borrowings.

"MWSS will be paid in the year 2013 after all the debts from other creditors have been paid. In the meantime, it will service its debts to the World Bank, which actually will be covered by a sovereign guarantee," he added.

Another provision in the plan states that Maynilad's creditors and shareholders have also agreed to allow private investors to acquire a majority stake in the company.

This development came up as prospective investors, including DMCI Holdings Inc., confirmed their interest to acquire the stake held by Benpres in Maynilad. Another consortium of banks led by ING Barings and the Ayala Group also signified interest in the west concession area.

"This proposed condition will be included as it opens opportunities for a private investor to takeover the company, instead of the government getting it back," designated Maynilad court receiver Rosario Bernaldo told the INQUIRER.

Questions ...

From page B4

Email address: edza9257@yahoo.com.

PARP National Convention: On Friday, May 27, the PARP will hold its 5th National Convention at the Escaler Hall, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Sen. Sergio Osmeña III will be the keynote speaker, former Senate President Jovito Salonga will be the quest speaker. If you have nothing much to do that day, come join us. Registration, lunch and snacks are free. Giveaways for the first hundred, but your donations are most welcome.

SPV TRANSACTIONS

Banks' NPLs down 5.4%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BAD loan ratio of Philippine commercial banks improved to 11.79 percent of total loans as of end-February from 12.54 percent a month ago.

This was attributed to the sale of several banks' bad loans through Special Purpose Vehicle deals, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

The BSP said there was a 5.4-percent decline in the banks' non-performing loans in February from a month ago mainly due to the bulk sales of P14.22 billion worth of non performing loans. The bulk sales were completed before the deadline for the incentives provided by the Special Purpose Vehicle Act of 2002.

At the same time, there was a modest growth of 0.7 percent in the banking system's total loan portfolio.

The NPL ratio of 11.79 percent during the month was also better than the 14.25 percent ratio recorded a year ago.

Net of inter-bank loans, the BSP reported that the sector's NPL ratio was also lower at 14.08 percent at end-February from 14.97 percent a month ago and 17.56 percent a year ago.

On the other hand, more restructuring of loans took place as the ratio of restructured loans to total loans rose to 7.17 percent from 6.84 percent in the previous month. The 5.6 percent growth in restructured loans outpaced the fresh credit expansion.

A debt restructuring can cover a whole range of debt concessions—including the stretching out of maturities, lowering of interest rates and in extreme cases, the conversion of debt into equity—to give the borrower some room to breath and chance to revive its business.

Non-performing restructured loans also climbed by 9.6 percent, bringing the ratio to total restructured loans up by 1.83 percentage points to 49.91 percent.

In the meantime, the ratio of gross real and other properties owned or acquired (ropoas) to gross assets slid to 5.19 percent at end-February from 5.46 percent a month ago. There was a 3.1-percent drop in ropoas, as a result of P6 billion worth of SPV deals.

At end-February, the commercial banking sector was still saddled with P204.1 billion worth of ropoas.

The sector's non-performing assets—combining the NPLs with ropoas—stood at 10.45 percent at end-February from 11.16 percent a month ago and 12.85 percent a year ago.

Trade show on halal products slated

THE MALAYSIAN government is holding a trade show on halal food products in its embassy in Makati City May 25-27 in an effort to widen its supply base as well as help the country improve in the production of food approved by Islamic authorities.

According to lawyer Abdul Rahman RT Linzag, president of the Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines (IDCP), 20 companies from Malaysia were expected to take part in the seminar cum exhibit.

"The organizers also invited local producers to show their products free of charge," Linzag said. "We have at least 50 producers of certified halal products, and they are interested."

IDCP is currently the only halal certifying body in the country as recognized by concerned international agencies such as the Indonesia-based World Halal Council.

Linzag explained that based on a Supreme Court ruling, the government is not supposed to be involved in the certification of halal food although IDCP and similar groups may do so.

Established in 1981, IDCP is a federation of 95 Muslim organizations nationwide established in 1981 and is a member of the Regional Islamic Da'wah Council of Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

"Our local producers turn out processed foodstuff made of chicken, fishes, noodles, etc.," Linzag explained. "Since these are processed, they require the strictest monitoring before, during and after production to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the consumers.

Ronnel W. Domingo

Napocor sees drop in deficit

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEFICIT of state-run National Power Corp. is expected to be trimmed down to only P32.3 billion this year, as the power firm generates additional revenue from recent power rate hikes.

Finance Undersecretary Nieves Osorio said Napocor's deficit was earlier estimated at P36.3 billion. This will be slashed to P32.3 billion following the recent approval of the 36-centavo-per-kilowatt average increase in Napocor's rate.

The rate increase includes the 5-centavo hike in basic electricity charge, the application of the Generation Rate Adjustment Mechanism (GRAM) and the Incremental Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment (Icera).

She said the original deficit projection of P36.3 billion for 2005 was based on a conservative forecast of getting the approval for only 30-centavo power rate increase.

The deficit projection for Napocor this year was a significant improvement from its actual deficit last year of about P100 billion.

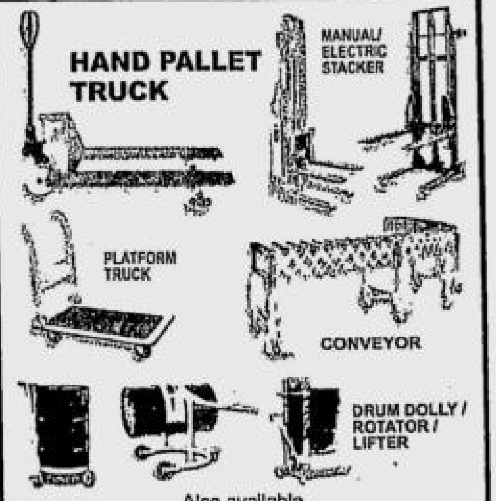
Napocor said the relatively better fiscal picture for Napocor this year can also be attributed to the privatization of some of its assets, including the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant.

The power firm said the winning bidder for the Masinloc plant—YNN Pacific Consortium Inc.—was scheduled to pay the 40-percent down payment of the of the $561.7-million purchase price by the end of the year.

Napocor last Thursday was able to generate funds to partially cover its financing requirement for the year by selling more than P5 billion worth of five- and seven-year bonds. The bonds carried a sovereign guarantee.

The result of the Napocor's debt issue showed that the power firm's bonds were already getting enough market interest. In the past, the national government was borrowing in behalf of Napocor, perceived as a high credit risk by investors, to get cheaper interest rates.

With the positive market response to the Napocor bond issue, the power firm said it was possible that it would again tap the domestic market this year to complete its financing requirements. But it added that it was keeping its options open for other revenue-raising schemes.



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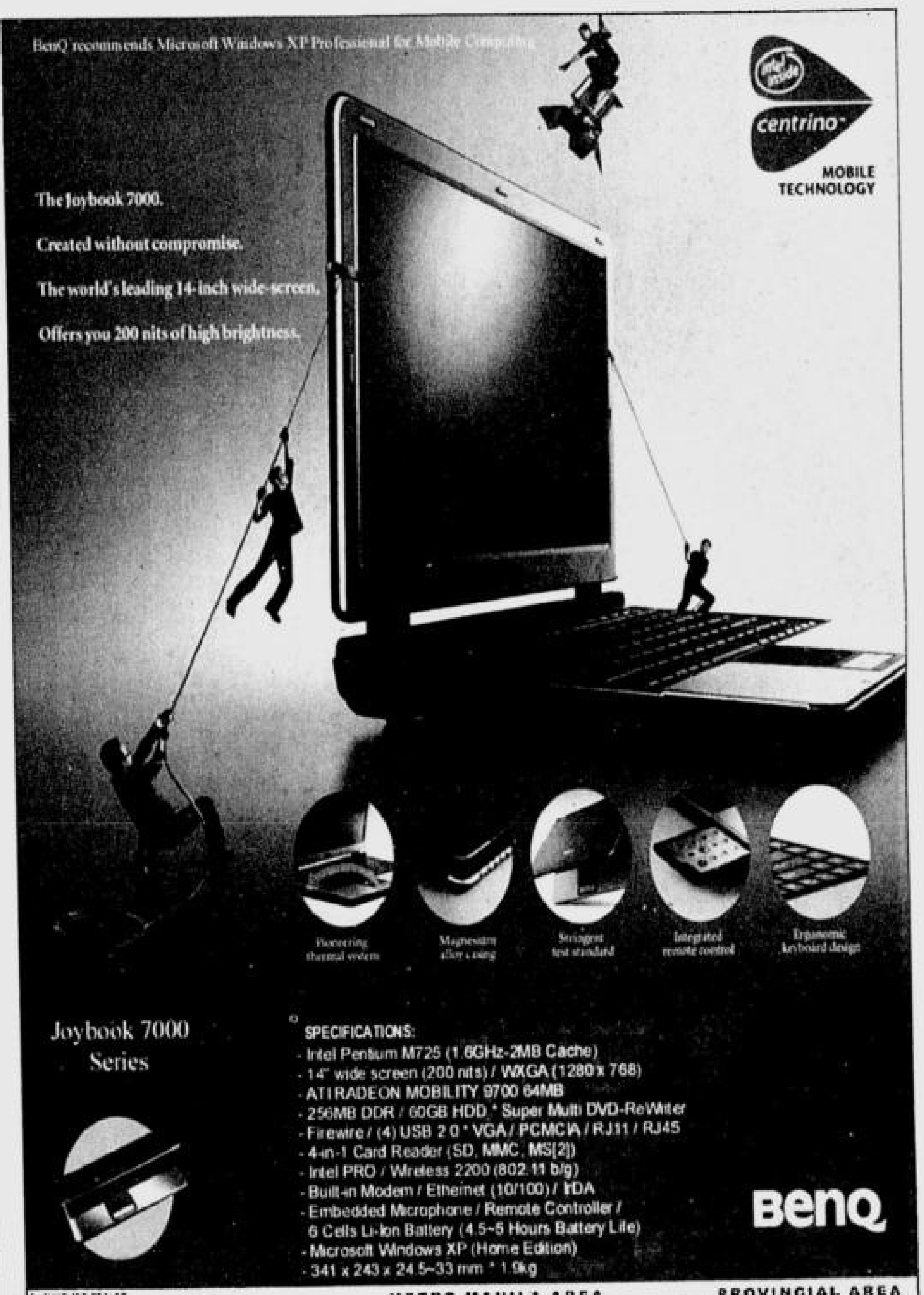

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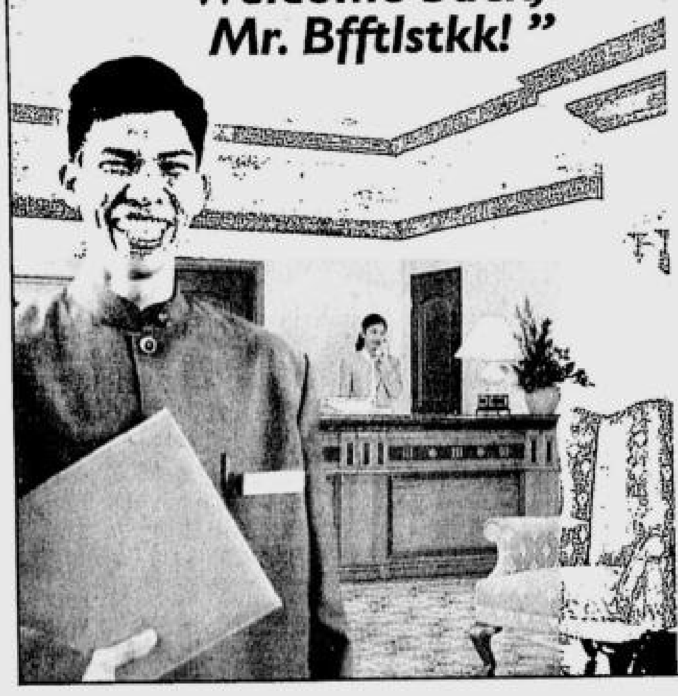

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Power company, rural bank plan initial public offering

POWER generation firm First Generation Holdings and Producers Rural Bank of Cabanatuan in Nueva Ecija are keen on joining the roster of listed companies.

Informed sources said First Gen has already tapped investment banks UBS, Credit Lyonnais, BDO Capital and ATR Kim Eng as underwriters.

Separately, PSE president Francis Lim said First Gen planned to offer between 20 and 40 percent of new and previously owned shares worth an estimated $300 million.

First Gen is the holding company of the Lopez group for power and energy-related businesses and controls some 1,725 megawatts of generation capacity.

First Gen's subsidiaries include First Gas Power Corp., and FGP Corp. which own 1,000 MW and 500 MW natural gas-fired power plants, respectively.

In a management report, PSE also said it had contacted several companies for a possible initial public offering.

These included Philippine Business Bank, juice maker Zesto Corp., coffee chain operator Figaro, and call center group eTelecare.

The PSE also identified other companies it would set meetings with to entice them to sell shares to the public.

These include Internet text messaging company Chikka.Com, National Bookstore, oil firm Flying V, beauty care products maker Splash, Pascual Laboratories and PNOC Energy Development Corp.

Last year, only International Exchange Bank braved an IPO.

This year, Manila Water Co. of the Ayala Group raised around P5 billion from its public offer while SM Investments Corp., the flagship company of mall tycoon Henry Sy Sr. got P29 billion from the biggest IPO so far. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Banco de Oro shelves plan to buy EPCIB shares of SSS

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank has temporarily shelved its plan to buy into Equitable PCI Bank due to legal constraints.

Sources close to the family of retail magnate Henry Sy said the plan had to be shelved as the case involving the acquisition of EPCIB shares held by the Social Security System was not progressing.

The Supreme Court last year blocked SSS from selling its 187.8 million EPCIB shares to the Sy-owned Banco de Oro Capital and Investment Corp.

The high court issued the order last Oct. 5 after five senators asked the tribunal to stop the scheduled auction last Oct. 20 for allegedly being disadvantageous to the government.

BDO said that it had "validly acquired rights and interests" over the SSS shares in Equitable after it reached a negotiated deal with SSS on Dec. 30, 2003.

SSS agreed to sell its shares to BDO at P43.50 per share or for P8.17 billion.

BDO, meanwhile, has agreed to buy the branch network of United Overseas Bank of Singapore for P600 million. In exchange for the branch assets, BDO will assume UOB's branch deposit liabilities.

UOB corporate secretary Vivien Chan announced in Singapore last week that the sale was part of the restructuring of UOB's operations in the country.

UOB said it was focusing on wholesale banking and fee-based income.

"Since a full branch network is not essential for wholesale banking, UOBP has decided to rationalize its branch operations," she said.

BDO, the eighth biggest bank in the country, aims to rapidly expand its banking business by acquiring the operation and branches of other banks.

BDO is a member of the SM Group of companies, which is the largest mall operator and retailer in the Philippines.

It had resources of P179 billion as of last year and a deposit base of P128 billion.

BDO has a nationwide network of 184 branches and 327 ATMs.

UOB Philippines, on the other hand, operates 67 branches nationwide with a deposit base of P19 billion.

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Veggie traders buck signing of trade pact

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Vegetable traders here have questioned the signing of the early harvest agreement between the Philippines and China.

Alfredo Alangdeo, president of the Benguet Vegetable Distributors Cooperative, said the farmers were initially relieved when the Philippine-China bilateral trade agreement was not signed during the recent state visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao.

But while the farmers were on red alert over such pact that would have paved the way for the entry of Chinese vegetables, Alangdeo said Philippine and Chinese trade and commerce officials actually worked overtime to sign the early harvest program.

Alangdeo said the early harvest program would bring the same results.

"The provisions of the EHP are similar to the contents of the bilateral pact which are, being opposed by the farmers," he said.

Alangdeo said provincial officials and farmers should now train their guns on Trade Sécretary Juan Santos who signed the EHP in behalf of the government together with Chinese Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai.

Reports show that on April 27, 2005, Santos and Bo indeed wrapped up the EHP under the framework agreement on comprehensive economic cooperation of Southeast Asian nations, spearheaded by China.

The cooperation puts into effect an Asean-China free trade zone by 2010.

The EHP would open the local markets of Asean members to Chinese products by advancing low-tariff entry privileges before the free trade pact comes into full swing in five years.

Alangdeo said a memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been forged by Santos and Bo to implement the EHP by Jan. 1, 2006.

He said the EHP seems to be a repacked version of the Philippine-China bilateral quarantine agreement and the Philippine-China bilateral trade agreement.

The quarantine pact was all set to be signed in September last year but the government was forced to freeze the agreement due to protests here from farmers.

UPS boosts literacy project

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—US package delivery giant United Parcel Service has donated $32,000 to the Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation to help improve literacy among Filipino children.

Lizzie Zobel, the foundation's vice president, received the check during last month's program celebrating the third anniversary and expansion of the UPS intra-Asia hub at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport here.

This was the second time since last year that the foundation became the recipient of the grant, according to Kenneth Torok, UPS Asia Pacific region president, during turnover rites witnessed by President Macapagal-Arroyo. The UPS Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of UPS established in 1951, has extended P9 million to at least six foundations involved in education, health and housing projects in poor communities, said Gillian Sim, UPS Philippines managing director.

Among these are the Habitat for Humanity and the Philippine Business for Social Progress.

Its employees had also contributed 30 hours as volunteers in the construction of houses.

The UPS Foundation's total grant in the Philippines this year has reached P9 million.
Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

	Issuance of bids	Pre-bid Conference	Submission of Bids	Opening of Bids	Approved Budget	Funding
Drugs & Medicine	May 10-27 2005	May 31, 2005 10:00 AM	June 21, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM	June 21, 2005 10:30 AM	Php 2,800,000.00	Regular Fund, Revolving Fund & Income
Medical/Surgical Supplies, X-ray, Dental & Lab. Reagents	May 10-27, 2005	June 1, 2005 10:00 AM	June 22, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM	June 22, 2005 10:30 AM	Php 4,000,000.00	
Food Stuff	May 10-27, 2005	May 30, 2005 10:00 AM	June 20, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM	June 20, 2005 10:30 AM	Php 1,418,000.00	
Medical kitchen & other various equipment	May 10-27, 2005	June 2, 2005 10:00 AM	June 23, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM	June 23, 2005. 10:30 AM	Php 5,551,058.00	

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation and award to contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRA) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

All activities shall be held at Tondo Medical Center, Conference Room, Balut, Tondo, Manila unless otherwise announced.

For further details, please contact Secretariat, Tondo Medical Center at Telephone Nos. 251-8421 to 23 loc. 207.

TONDO MEDICAL CENTER BAC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, TO ANNUL THE BIDDING PROCESS, REJECT ALL BIDS AT ANYTIME PRIOR TO THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT, WITHOUT THEREBY INCURRING ANY LIABILITY TO THE AFFECTED BIDDERS OR ANY OBLIGATION TO INFORM THE AFFECTED BIDDER/BIDDERS ON THE REASONS FOR DOING SO TMC-BAC ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION TO COMPENSATE OR TO INDEMNIFY BIDS NOR DEEM IT GUARANTEED THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) **VICTOR J. DELA CRUZ, MD, CESO IV**
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(PDI - May 2 & 9, 2005)

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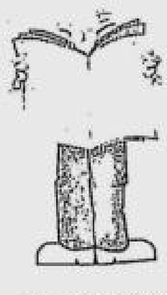

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If no contest is received, the respective Companies will issue replacement certificates after one year from date of last publication of this notice, or even before expiration of said period provided the registered owner(s) files a bond or other securities in accordance with law.

(PDI-May 7 & 9, 2005)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(PUBLIC BIDDING)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) wishes to invite bidders for the **Network Monitoring Tool Project.**

Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from May 3 to 16, 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committee (OSBAC) Room 1804, 18th Floor Citystate Centre #709 Shaw Blvd. Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 3,000.00.

The Government of the Philippines through PhilHealth had provided funds for this project for which this invitation is issued. The approved budget for this contract is **Php 5,000,000.00.**

A pre-bid conference will be held on May 17, 2005 at 1:30p.m. at the OSBAC (Rm. 1804).

The bidders shall prepare their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposal in three separate sealed envelopes and drop in the respective bid boxes located at the above-mentioned address.

Deadline for submission of bids will be on June 7, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon at the OSBAC. Opening of bids will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same venue. Any bidder who comes late will not be entertained. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (OSBAC). Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

The BAC-ITR shall determine if each prospective bidder is eligible to participate in the bidding by examining the completeness of each prospective bidder's eligibility requirements or statements against a checklist of requirements, using the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria.

To guarantee the faithful performance by the winning bidder of his/her obligations under the contract prepared in accordance with the bidding documents, he/she shall post a Bid Security in any of the following forms and amount:

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid	Amount of Bid Security
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)	Php 50,000.00
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)	Php 75,000.00
Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)	Php 125,000.00
Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)	Php 5,000,000.00

We look forward to your participation in this worthwhile endeavor.

PhilHealth reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PhilHealth further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MELINDA C. MERCADO, CESO IV
SVP, Health Insurance Operations Sector and
Chairperson, BAC-ITR

(PDI – May 6 & 9, 2005)

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER V, Item No. OMBA-ADO5-2-1998, SG-24;

Education: Masteral Degree; Experience: 4 years in position/s involving management and supervision; Training: 24 hours of training in management and supervision; Eligibility: Career Service (Professional) Second Level Eligibility

Interested applicants should submit applications within twenty (20) working days from the date of this publication to the Administrative Division, at the above address, the following requirements pursuant to Office Order No. 49-05:

1) A letter stating the position applied for;
2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (Civil Service Commission 212);
3) 1" x 1" Picture (colored);
4) Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5) Transcript of Records;
6) Certificates of Seminars/Trainings attended;
7) Service Records or Certificates from previous / present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable)
8) Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Gregorio F. Zukiela was extrajudicially settled among his heirs with waiver of rights as per Doc. No 349, Page No. 71, Book No. 32, Series of 1997 of Notary Public Mario G. Ramos of Manila. (PDI-May 2, 9 & 16, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of PEDRO M. MALE SR who died on July 23, 1993 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs before Notary Public Orlando O. Alles of Quezon City as per Doc. No. 213; Page No. 44; Book no. 09; Series of 2005 (PDI - May 9,16 & 23, 2005)

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Tel Nos (053) 561-4111/ 561-8240/ 255-7211
Brgy San Pablo, Ormoc City

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc of Ormoc City invites interested eligible bidders to submit bid for Security Services.

Bid Documents shall be issued to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Hundred Pesos Only (P 500 00) starting May 16, 2005.

Pre-bid conference will be held on May 10, 2005 at 9 o'clock in the morning at LEYECO V Boardroom, Brgy San Pablo, Ormoc City.

Failure to attend the pre-bid conference shall disqualify the agency from dropping his bid.

Sealed bids will be received by the Pre-bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte on June 9, 2005 at 1:30 in the afternoon, at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives

LEYECO V reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers or proposals as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) JOVENAL R. ALESNA
General Manager

(PDI - May 6 & 9, 2005)

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Masahista 4 Clinic 631-3496

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ARTDO International Conference Launching

ARTDO International marked its beginning in 1974 when the organization held its first annual conference. A core group of visionary leaders from 12 Asian Countries met in Manila on November 9, 1974 for the First Asian Regional Training and Development Organization (ARTDO) Conference. A shared vision brought them together: To promote human resource development as a prerequisite to economic growth and progress through a unified approach.

Today, ARTDO is an international umbrella body of organizations from 30 countries. It has widened the industry's focus to broaden perspectives in training and development practices and performance to measurable results. This year, the Philippine Society for Training and Development will host the ARTDO International Convention with its theme "Unified Global HRD Breaking Boundaries". Let ARTDO be your guide to exceptional learning and performance. Join us for the launching of the 32nd ARTDO International Management and HRD Conference on May 11, 2005 at the Manila Hotel from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Dato Dr. Thomas Chee, ARTDO President Emeritus and Dr. Vinayshil Gaudam will be the resource speaker for this event. For registration and details please call PSTD Secretariat at 812-9931 813-9072 or email at secretariat@pstd.org.

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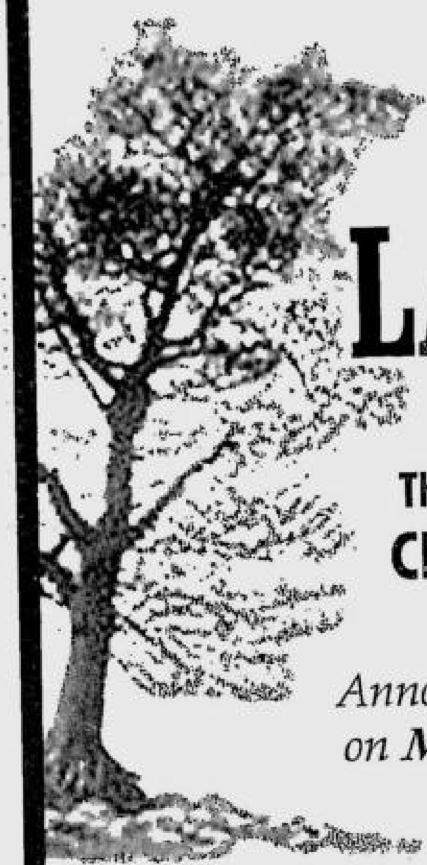

**TOGETHER WITH THE FAMILY
OF OUR BELOVED**

LAU CHO CHI

**THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF
CELINE MARKETING CORP.**

*Announce her joining our Creator
on* ***May 7, 2005*** *at the age of 100.*

Her children **CHING SAN** and **SAU FA, CHING ZHONG** and **SIU KENG, PO NARN** and **WING FAI** (†), **BEN** and **VICKY**.

Her grandchildren; great grandchildren, great great grandson; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 1of the Mortuary and Crematory of The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, until May 12.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 12, 2005, after the 8:00 a.m. Necrological Service. Burial will follow at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque.

Our caring, loving and selfless

LAU CHO CHI

Peacefully joined our Lord
and her husband CHUA KAI (†) on
May 7, 2005 at the age of 100.

Her children

CHING SHAN and SAU FA,
CHING ZHONG and SIU KENG,
PO NARN, and WING FAI (†)
BEN and VICKY

Her grandchildren; great grandchildren; great great grandson; relatives and friends, request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

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An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
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FR. PRUDENCIO F. MACAYAN, S.J.

was called home to the Lord on Sunday, 8 May 2005.

Wake : Ateneo de Manila High School.Chapel,
Ateneo de Manila University Campus, Loyola Heights, Q.C.
Daily Mass every evening at 8:00 P.M.

Funeral Mass : at 8:00 A.M. on Thursday, 12 May
in the Church of Gesù, Ateneo de Manila University

Interment : Sacred Heart Novitiate Cemetery, Novaliches, Q.C.,
immediately after the Funeral Mass.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

**"I am
the way,
the truth
and the
life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me."**
John 14:6

The family of the late

Dominga Remulla Buenaventura

*who passed away on May 7, 2005
at the age of 76*

Wishes to inform relatives and friends that her body lies in state at Premiere Chapel, La Funeraria Sapinoso, Gen. E. Topacio St., Imus, Cavite.

Interment will take place on Wednesday, May 11, 2005 at Imus Memorial Garden after the 3:15 p.m. Holy Mass at Imus Cathedral.

Her loving husband, JACINTO A. BUENAVENTURA; her children MELISSA and RUEL and grandchild JHOEVEN request relatives, friends and the pious reader to pray for her eternal rest.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Our Beloved "Mama"

Milagros Artuz-Peñasales

Has joined her husband "Gonzalo" and peacefully rest in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord on May 1, 2005 at the age of 88 in Los Angeles, California, USA.

Her loving children **Fraulin**, **Ferol**, **Cynthia**, **Ricky** and **Fenix** and their spouses **Lilia Jereza**, **Manny Evalle**, **Carol Luspo** and **Leilamae Cuenza**; her ever loving grandchildren **Lilen** (+), **Melge**, **Nico**, **Mikel**, **Miles**, **Suzanne**, **Cathy**, **Gonzalo Leo**, **Clarisse** and **Dulcerina**; her relatives and friends request prayers for the internal repose of her soul.

Her remains will arrive on board PR 103 from Los Angeles California on Monday, May 9, 2005 and will lie in state at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City from May 9 to May 11, 2005.

On Thursday, May 12, 2005 her remains will be flown to Iloilo City and will lie in state at St. Joseph The Worker Parish, Jaro, Iloilo City from May 12 to May 13, 2005.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 14, 2005 at the Peñasales Mausoleum, Iloilo Memorial Park after the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at St. Clement Parish, La Paz, Iloilo City at 2:30 pm.

UNIONBANK

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS AND PAYMENT OF CASH DIVIDEND

March 31, 2005

For All Stockholders,

Please be advised that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of UnionBank of the Philippines will be at the Rigodon Ballroom of The Peninsula Manila, corner of Ayala and Makati Avenues, Makati City on Friday, **May 27, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.**

The Agenda for the said meeting will be as follows:

I. Calling the Roll
II. Proof of Notice of Meeting
III. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 28, 2004
IV. Chairman/CEO's Report to Stockholders – Mr. Justo A. Ortiz
V. Annual Report of Management on Operations for 2004 -President Victor B. Valdepeñas
VI. Appointment of External Auditor
VII. Amendment of UnionBank By-Laws to include as additional provisions of *Article V Sections 16 to 19* re: Creation of Risk Management and Corporate Governance Committees and their functions
VIII. Election of Directors for 2005 – 2006 term
IX. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record as of **April 08, 2005** will be entitled to attend and participate at the above meeting.

Please be advised also that UnionBank has obtained approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas ("BSP") for the cash dividend declaration of PESOS: ONE AND FIFTEEN CENTAVOS (P1.15) per share declared by UnionBank Board of Directors on January 28, 2005 or a total equivalent of P633,932,858.60 based on the stockholdings of UnionBank of 551,245,964 shares as of December 31, 2004.

Accordingly, the Board of Directors of UnionBank has approved to set the Record Date on *May 03, 2005* for stockholders entitled to the cash dividends while Payment Date will be on *May 27, 2005.*

For your information. Thank you.

Very truly yours,
(Sgd.) ATTY. FE B. MACALINO
Corporate Secretary

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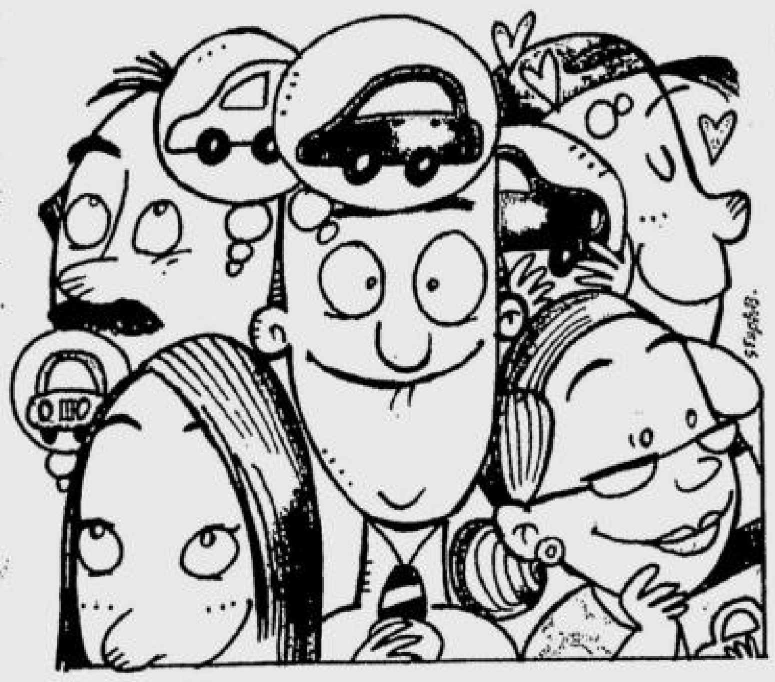
JANUARY-APRIL

Vehicle sales up 9.7%



By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE INTRODUCTION of new vehicle models and promotional activities in the first four months of the year pushed up vehicle sales by 9.7 percent.

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association said in a joint report that they sold 30,246 units from January to April, from 27,583 units in the same period of 2004.

The number of units sold in the first four months accounted for 32 percent of the local industry's target of 95,000 units for 2005.

Campi and TMA said overall sales were seen further increasing until June.

The groups also said passenger car sales went up 7.5 percent in the first four months to 11,452 units from 10,652 units in the same period last year.

January to April sales of commercial vehicles—Asian utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses—fared better with an increase of 13.7 percent to 18,794 units from 16,536 units.

The assemblers said the increase could be attributed to the introduction of new models in the pickup and compact sport utility vehicle segments.

In the first four months, AUV sales went up 22 percent to 8,805 units, while LCV sales went up 3.6 percent to 9,300 units.

On the other hand, sales of light trucks slid 4 percent to 554 units, while that of trucks and buses dropped 18.8 percent to 135 units.

Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. remained the market leader with a 34.5-percent share.

Toyota sold 10,430 units from January to April or 5 percent higher than the 9,932 units it sold in the same period last year.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. ranked second with 15.4 percent of the market, followed by Isuzu Philippines Corp. with a 10.8-percent share of the market.

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Overview: This 3-day seminar is designed for entrepreneurs and professionals who are interested in venturing into the Medical Transcription Outsourcing Business.

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2. Offshore MT Industry and Market Assessment
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4. General Legal Issues for MT Companies (HIPAA)
5. Marketing the Service (Tricks of the Trade)
6. Quality and Productivity for MT Companies
7. Process and Delivery for MT Companies
8. Resource Requirements
9. Manpower Requirements
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EMPIRE INSURANCE COMPANY
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
As of December 31,2003

ADMITTED ASSETS		
Bonds	P	137,563,192.52
Stocks		37,617,925.23
Real Estate		7,482,858.36
Other Loans		443,599.41
Security Fund		17,902.00
Other Investments		15,162,500.00
Cash on Hand and in Banks		8,170,307.90
Premiums Receivable		6,747,076.56
Premiums Due from Ceding Companies		15,630,726.68
Reinsurance Recoverable on Losses		5,961,529.32
Salvage Recoverable		1,324,939.48
Accrued Investment Income		2,811,894.55
Electronic Data Processing Machine		481,707.92
TOTAL ADMITTED ASSETS	P	239,416,159.93
LIABILITIES		
Losses and Claims Payable	P	16,820,871.82
Loss Adjustment Expenses Payable		19,625.71
Reserve for Unearned Premiums		22,306,362.36
Catastrophe Loss Reserve		280,755.55
Premiums Due to Reinsurers		14,390,509.67
Premiums Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers		3,297,401.89
Loss Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers		12,.797.62
Commissions Payable		14,502,421.85
Taxes Payable		6,563,346.60
Accounts/Notes Payable		1,233,647.81
Return Premiums Payable		13,788.00
Unearned Bond Discount		6,459.04
Other Liabilities		6,334,270.79
Total Liabilities	P	85,782,258.71
STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Capital Stock Paid Up	P	50,000,000.00
Special Surplus Funds:		
Fluctuation Reserve - Stocks		5,215,466.23
Fluctuation Reserve - Foreign Exchange		42,234.96
Retained Earnings		98,376,200.03
Total Stockholders' Equity	P	153,633,901.22
TOTAL LIABILITIES & STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	P	239,416,159.93

(This synopsis, prepared from the 2003 Annual Statement, approved by the Insurance Commissioner, is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code of 1978 as amended.)

BSP expects $1.2B in new investments

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects the Philippines to attract about $1.2 billion in foreign direct investments this year due to the improving business climate.

BSP officer in charge Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters last Friday that FDI flows to the country would likely more than double this year despite a slowdown in economic growth.

"Last year, FDI inflows were small, reaching only $506 million, because of the many uncertainties," he said.

Last year was the first time since 2001 that FDI to the country had fallen below the $1-billion mark.

This despite the domestic economy growing at its strongest pace in 15 years.

Most investors shunned the country early last year due to concerns over the May presidential elections.

They remained on the sidelines afterwards due to worries over the government's fragile fiscal position and expectations of sovereign credit rating downgrades.

Manufacturing and telecommunication companies were the biggest beneficiaries of foreign direct equity flows in 2004.

Tetangco said more foreign investments would flow into the mining sector, following the Supreme Court ruling that allowed foreign investments in the sector.

He said, however, that the bulk of FDIs to the mining sector would not come in this year.

Using data on investments registered and approved by regulators at the end of last year, Tetangco said the BSP also expected more FDIs to support power capacity expansion as well as business process outsourcing businesses.

FDI flows to the Philippines steadily rose from $857.87 million in 2001 to $1.43 billion in 2002, and up to $1.49 billion in 2003 before declining last year.

Compared to the rest of developing Asia, the Philippines got a meager share of foreign investments.

Net FDIs to the region had risen from a post Asian crisis low of $49 billion in 2002 to about $62 billion in 2004, based on estimates by the World Bank.

As in previous years, the bulk of the FDIs to developing Asia went to China, which bagged $53 billion of total.

The other big beneficiaries of FDIs in the region were Hong Kong and Singapore.

The much-improved outlook on foreign investments as well as the sustained growth of inflows from migrant remittances had encouraged the BSP to hike its balance of payment surplus target this year by about 84 percent to $852 million from the earlier forecast of $464 million.

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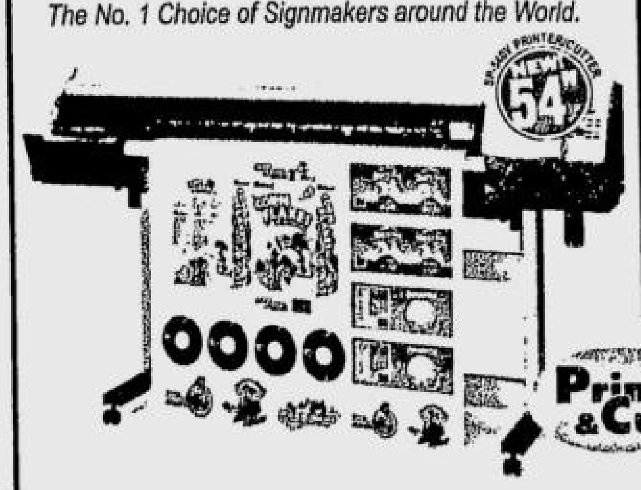

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Business Features Editor
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Small business holds key to progress

BIG business may be the country's top taxpayers and highest paying employers. But collectively, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) provide employment for 70 percent of the country's labor force. Because of the jobs they create and the incomes they provide, these MSMEs help keep social discontent in check.

According to the National Statistics Office (NSO), MSMEs in 2001 accounted for 99.6 percent of the country's total business enterprises at 811,589.

They also provide jobs to 69.1 percent of all employed Filipinos. This figure fares well in comparison with Korea but lesser than China's 74 percent and Japan's 78 percent.

In terms of economic output, however, local MSMEs account for only 32 percent, way below the levels of Korea (46 percent), Japan (56 percent) and China (60 percent). This means local MSMEs are actually producing too little, thereby paying less taxes and other revenues with which to keep the economy moving and growing.

MICRO, small and medium enterprises employ 70 percent of the labor force, and 32 percent of total output.

To expand their contributions to the economy, the Philippine government is aiming not just to spur their productivity but to more than triple their number and in the process help create 10 million more jobs by 2010.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) says that the potential of MSMEs for higher output and creation of more jobs has been constrained by several factors. These include limited access to credit; underdeveloped sources of raw materials; limited access to modernizing technology; and lack or low level of market information.

Micro enterprises are those with assets, before financing, of P1.5 milion or less and employ not more than nine workers.

Small enterprises are those with assets, before financing, of above P1.5 million to P15 million and employ 10 to 99 workers. Medium enterprises are those which have assets, before financing, of above P15 million to P100 million and employ 100 to 199 workers.

In line with the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010, the government aims to achieve its target of tripling the number of MSMEs and creating 10 million jobs by the end of the decade through at least three strategies.

The first is to provide credit, technology and marketing support to new enterprises. From just P24 billion in 2004, the government shall have increased credit support to the new businesses to P309.98 billion by 2010.

Product development courses shall be conducted nationwide for would-be entrepreneurs, along with identification and development of markets.

The second is to tap overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to invest their earnings in micro and small income-generating enterprises. The Departmenf of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall provide technical support to these OFWs through SME Development Plan.

And third is ensure greater involvement of local government units in promoting small business activities. These LGUs will also provide MSMEs with information on business opportunities, available sources of funds, and the latest product designs. *Edwin Daiwey, DevNews & Features*

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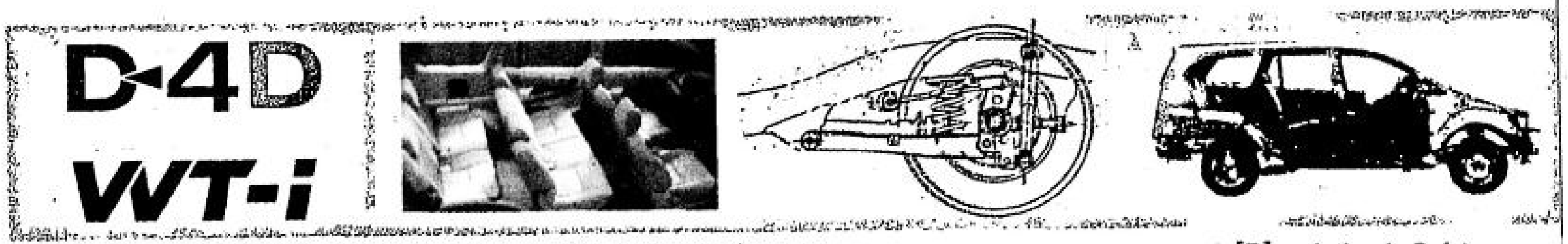

A [R]evolution in Power

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Blogs: A new tech tool for change

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Augusto L. de Leon

BLOGS, a permutation of the Internet and texting technology, provides a new way for possibly reforming the corrupt ways of politicians, bureaucrats, entrenched interest groups, leeching on the general public and dragging the economy down. It can also be a driving force for ethical practices and good corporate governance.

Blogs are network systems of mass communication that bypass the established traditional communication medium, i.e. print, radio, TV, etc. and media, i.e. the people behind the medium of communication. Businessweek reports that the power of blogging is mostly to disrupt the status quo. It also reports that General Motors vice chair Lutz has a blog strategy for a 2-way communication with their customers which has proved to be effective.

Once a network is established, a widespread active participation of citizens who have computers and cell phones can be informed of the issues that affect their lives.

Information source will be the ordinary citizen who now feel helpless having no connection with media and those in position of power. The blog network becomes the new vehicle to pass on information to a great mass of people. Any one on the "know" can be a "whistle blower" to expose corrupt deals and manipulation of justice. Issues need not be kept alive for weeks in the front pages and commentaries of radio and TV to create public opinion. Blogging crystallizes public opinion instantly thus enabling the ordinary citizens to become pressure groups for transparency. The public will know who perpetuates corruption, how it is done and how it causes injury to the ordinary citizen.

Blogging can expose the contradictory claims of managed information disseminated to the public. For example, the government press release in one newspaper that we had a successful rice harvest only to have another article of news that justifies the increase of rice imports from 800,000 tons to 1 million tons because of poor harvest. Politicians get away with PR spins because not too many people read newspapers, much less read more than one newspaper. There are many news items claiming that the people should pay more taxes but very little on how tax expenditures benefit the people. Likewise, there is very little information on the high propensity of government to spend exorbitantly as soon as they are able to squeeze money from the people, e.g. power rates increased to bring more revenue for the cash-strapped government corporation. Napacor paid executives P119 million in retirement only to rehire them the next day. Or when government spends P200 million for voter ID that no one got after the picture taking.

The more people understand that they pay for the cost of corruption with inflation and lack of basic services, the greater the pressure for policy makers to adopt policies that benefit the public instead of themselves and their interest groups.

Our society is ripe for blogging. Radio and TV programs where people can go to complain or ask for help with their problems in dealing with the government grow in popularity. The Pacific Education Plan holders are using texting to get justice instead of going to court. Texting is widespread across all socioeconomic groups. Messages like the false earthquake on a specific hour reached many people within a day. Half a million people gathered in Edsa after receiving text messages.

Blogging might yet be the tool for us to change our wayward ways.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is Principal Consultant of De Leon Consulting. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

PRESIDENT Arroyo, together with Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and other officials, leads the ceremonial posting of Cash Register Machines and Point-of-Sales Machine decals at the Esprit store in Glorietta, Makati.

Boy, girl scouts take on new duty

IN AN effort to promote honest tax collection, the BIR has assigned thousands of members of the Boy and Girl Scouts of the Philippines to post official BIR decals on all CRMs and POS of retail establishments, beginning with the Glorietta mall in Makati.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, together with Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, MBC president Ricardo Romulo and BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr., spearheaded the ceremony.

President Arroyo took a short trip to the Esprit store in Glorietta, Makati for the ceremonial posting of Cash Register Machines and Point-of-Sales Machine decals.

The ceremony, dubbed as Operation Dikit, signaled the launch of the Joint Tax Campaign Program of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) in collaboration with the Makati Business Club (MBC).

Cinderella Marketing Corp. bigwigs behind the famous chain of Esprit stores led by Edgar G. Coronel, president; Arthur G. Coronel, chief executive officer; Malou Coronel-De Venecia, director for marketing and communications and Richie Coronel Santos, group manager for merchandising, were all present to welcome and assist the President and her court during the ceremonial posting of decals.

"Cinderella supports Operation Dikit's thrust to promote awareness on the value of taxes and its major role in economic development. Our Esprit stores have signages which remind our customers to ask for receipts to ensure that every sale transaction will be accredited by the BIR. We are honored to lead other retailers in this ceremony," said De Venecia.

The Esprit store in Ayala Center, Makati, is one of the first establishments to register their CRMs and POS machines, as well as report their gross monthly sales via short messaging system, e-mails, or through BIR Portal.

GMA to award good corporate citizens

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will confer the Kapatiran sa Industriya Awards (Kapatid) on exemplary companies during the 26th national conference of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) on May 17-18, 2005, at the Manila Hotel.

The Kapatid awards is known as the Oscar of the business community for firms with model business practices in industrial relations, quality and productivity, social accountability, and strategic visioning and partnering for business and job preservation.

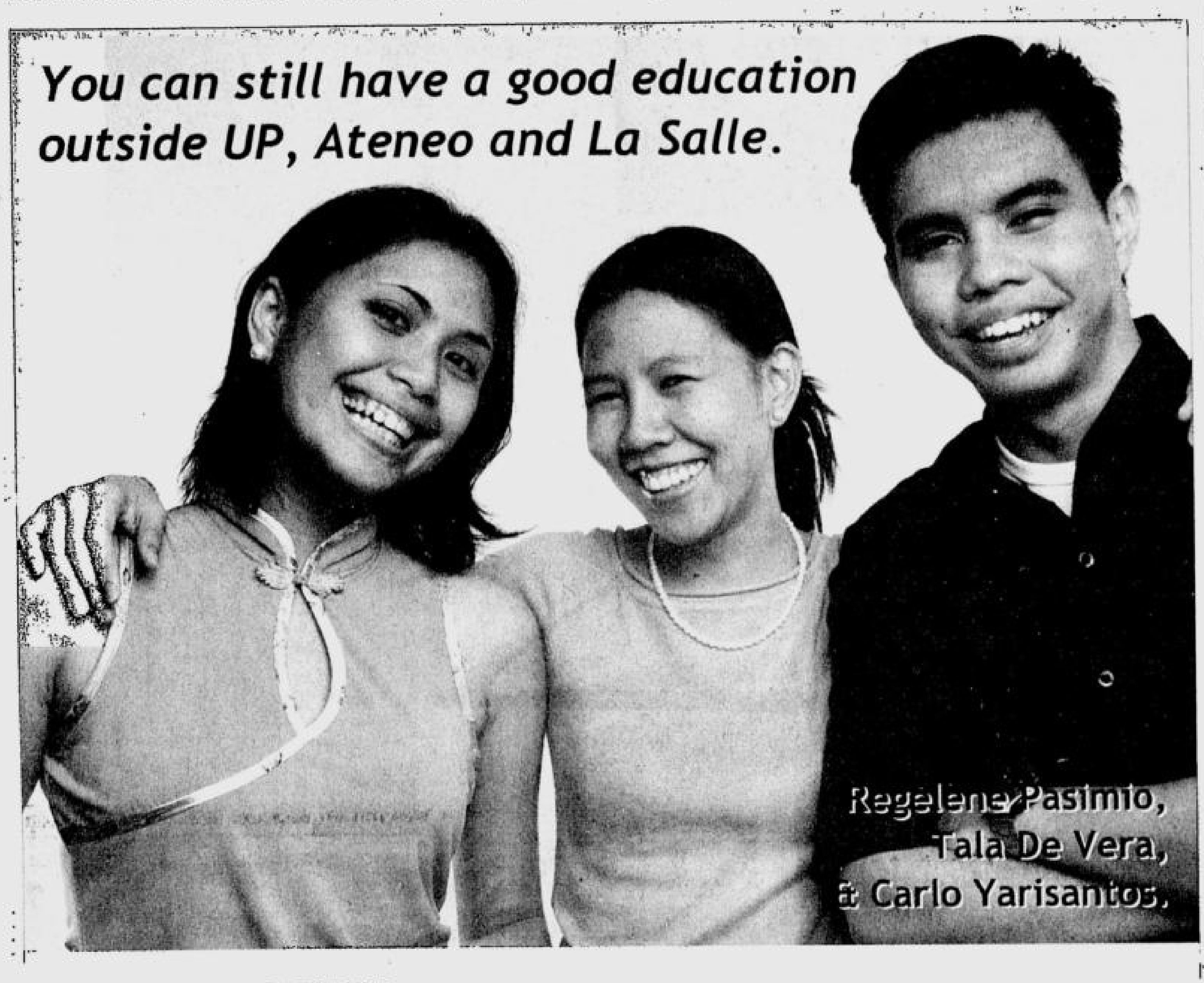
Ecop president Rene Y. Soriano said that these good practices are characterized by enterprise level cooperation and harmonious relationship between management and employees, resulting in labor and enterprise productivity, product and service quality, improved workplace conditions and enhanced relationship with society.

A new category for small and medium enterprises was introduced to distinguish them from large corporations.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas is the chair of the board of judges. Rene Cristobal of Ecop is the chair of the executive committee.

After awarding the Kapatid, the President will address conference participants. This year's conference theme is "The Filipino Entrepreneur. Local Roots. Global Reach." Lucio Tan, president of Philippine Airlines, is keynote speaker. Conference chair is Alegria "Bing" Limjoco.

Those who wish to attend the conference may call the secretariat at 897-9498, 897-4656, 897-4010, 0919-5274009 (for Sheila Ebora), 0917-8376509 (for Ogie), or send an e-mail to nce26@ecop.org.ph.



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Former insurance boss pursues passion for invention to help farmers

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SAN JOSE CITY—When he retired as president and chair of the board of a life insurance corporation, Alfonso Puyat turned his full attention and energy to a passion he nurtured over the years: inventing.

But his inventions have nothing to do with gadgetry or sophisticated weaponry or flying objects. They are formulations of chemicals or substances that are designed to bring him to the object of his other passion—the farmers and fishermen—whom he believes are not getting just rewards from their toil.

Puyat, 60, is the son of the late Sen. Gil Puyat and holds an MBA from a US university. He feels he has scored triumphs in what he is doing. Thus, he seemed unmindful of going out of his plush environment and staying in a far-away place.

In fact, the INQUIRER met him in the middle of a farming community in Barangay Tondod here.

"We made it," said the jubilant Puyat, as he whooped it up with farmer Fernando Gabuyo Jr. when the number of the latter's palay (unhusked rice) harvest was announced.

Gabuyo is Puyat's newfound ally in proving that the Filipino rice farmers can approximate or even surpass the output of the world's best rice farmers given the correct focus and assistance.

If their achievement is replicated by the rice farmers, the long sought after dream of the country's leaders of attaining self-sufficiency in rice will soon be achieved, they said.

Gabuyo's rice harvests, as certified by this city's agriculturist, Rogelio Malunay, were 346 cavans (50 kilos per cavan) from his 1.048 hectare farm using the Bigante hybrid rice variety, and 339 cavans from his 1.014 hectare riceland.

In both farms, Gabuyo used the chemicals supplied by Puyat.

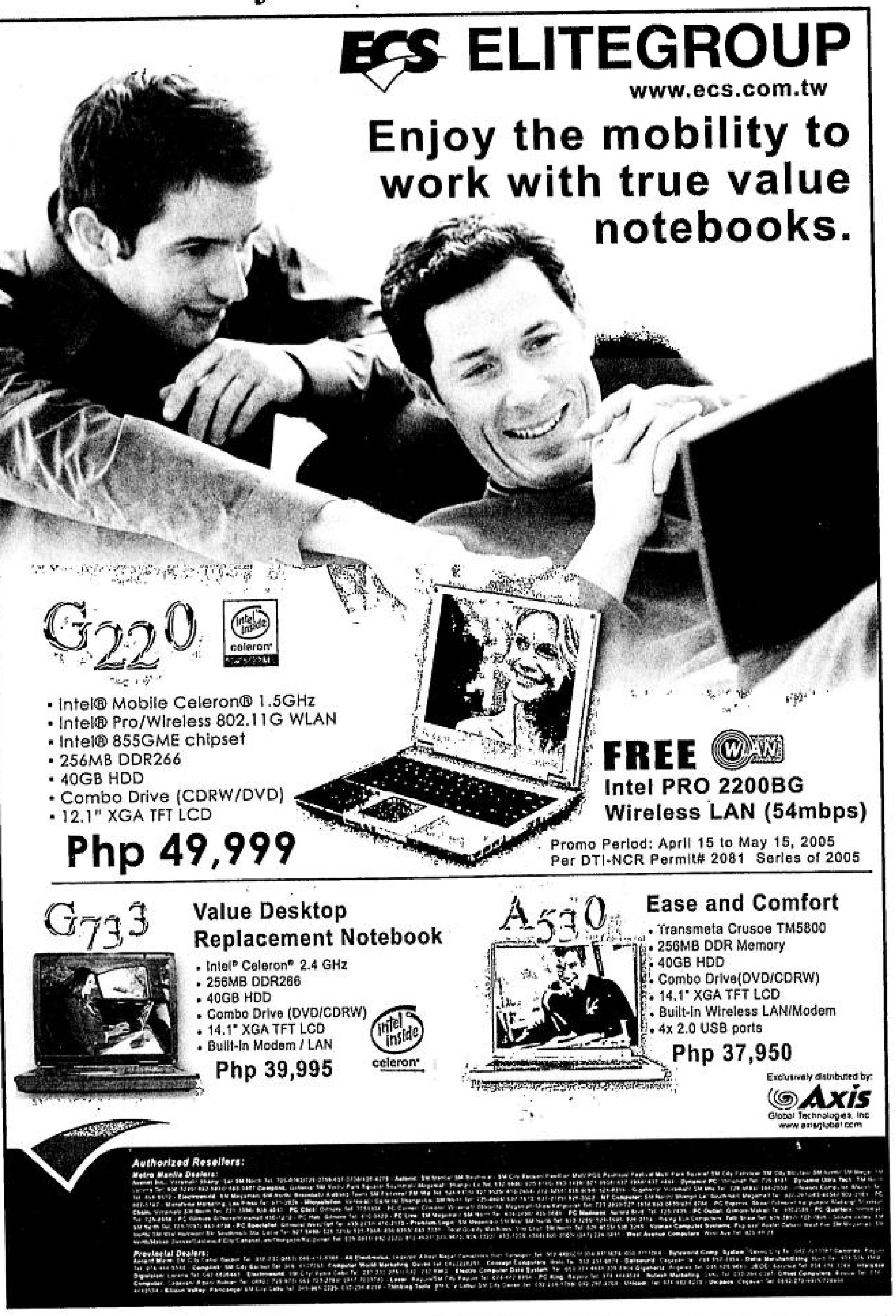
Earlier reports showed that the harvests came from a one-hectare area. Later verification indicated that the areas were bigger by 480 square meters and 140 square meters, respectively, as per land titles shown by Gabuyo.

Subsequent computation indicated that on a per hectare basis, Gabuyo's harvest equaled to 330.153 cavans for the Bigante hybrid and 334.32 cavans for the SL-8H varieties, respectively, which just the same were considered record rice harvests in the country.

As it turned out, Gabuyo's harvests were just a few cavans less than Australia's world record har-

FORMER/ B2-5

ALFONSO Puyat (left) admires the excellent rice grains shown by farmer Fernando Gabuyo Jr. (second from right). With them are technician Josie Avila of San Jose City (2nd from left) and assistant provincial agriculturist of Nueva Ecija, Jose Torres (right) ANSELMO ROQUE



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Solon says anti-terror bill creates 'Big Brother'

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

GIVING government extra powers to conduct electronic surveillance and wiretapping can be construed as creating a "Big Brother" over citizens, a party-list representative said after the consolidated anti-terrorism bill was filed in Congress.

"The anti-terror bill promotes a culture of paranoia, in which terrorism could be loosely construed to the extent that citizens would be wary of the Big Brother watching over them," said party-list Rep. Loretta Rosales of the Akbayan Citizen's Action Party.

Rosales added that the bill's intention to increase "search capabilities and provision on electronic surveillance and wiretapping" is sending the wrong message to the public that they should behave or be punished, while "ignoring policy questions that give rise to extremist responses and terrorist backlashes against government inadequacies."

The party-list representative insisted that while governments around world have increased surveillance, the threat of terrorism "is very much alive."

ROSALES

Rosales urged government to turn to more sustainable solutions instead, like putting food on the table, creating more jobs, pushing anti-corruption programs in government, and putting more government resources to health and education, and not on a law that will "codify more fear" in the country.

"The bill does nothing more than prepare the ingredients to legitimize fascistic practices," she said, adding that the country only needs to push the rule of law and implement existing laws, such as the Revised Penal Code, to prevent criminality in the country.

Meanwhile another party-list representative, Liza Largoza Maza, said that the anti-terror bill intends to silence government critics.

"With this government's record of human rights violations and President [Gloria Macapagal]-Arroyo's continued silence on the killing and disappearances of activist leaders, an anti terror law will effectively silence the remaining critics. But we will not be like lambs to the slaughter."

Maza opposed the anti-terror bill during the first public hearing on the consolidated bill on anti-terrorism.

The bill proposes to use modern surveillance methods to prevent threats of terrorism in the country.

"The country does not need a legislation that will further erode civil liberties and presents a clear and present danger to voices of dissent. There [is] already a plethora of laws that address problems of national security," Maza said.

The party-list representative added the proposed anti-terrorism law is "Arroyo government's [way of] joining the anti terror bandwagon of countries led by the United States, not mindful of the fact that more and more US citizens are lobbying against the Patriot Act, the US anti- terrorism law enacted in 2001."

In the United States, at least six states (Alaska, Maine, Vermont, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana), 373 cities and towns have already passed anti Patriot Act resolutions and ordinances or ballot initiatives to protect civil liberties. In the United Kingdom, she said, attempts to pass the "Prevention of Terrorism" bill prompted the third longest recorded sitting of the House of Lords, with more than 30 hours of marathon debate before the bill was passed.

"Indeed, there is a palpable movement internationally that rejects the anti-terror framework exemplified by the US Patriot Act," Maza said.

Section 19 of the "Anti-Terrorism Act of 2005" deals with provisions that will allow enforcement agencies to conduct electronic surveillance on suspected terrorists at the request of local courts.

Meanwhile a loose group of Filipino Internet activists launched an online petition against the anti-terrorism bill filed in Congress early this year.

Bantay ICT (ICT Watch) launched its online petition last week to mobilize support against government's plan to enact an anti-terrorism law. The group is composed of five members working for non-government organizations, according to the group's founder Joey Dimaandal.

The group aims to gather 1,000 signatures. To date, it has gathered only a little more than 400 signatures.

The group indicated earlier that it would submit the online petition to the House committee on human rights.

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NBI urges passing of anti-cybersex laws

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is urging lawmakers to come up with anti-cybersex laws to help the agency capture suspected cybersex shop operators in the Philippines.

NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division Director Elfren Meneses said that they could not conduct proper monitoring and entrapment cases against suspected cybersex operators in the absence of a cybersex law.

Meneses noted that current anti-pornography laws have no provisions covering cybersex. Instead of charging suspected operators, the NBI uses Article 201 covering "immoral doctrines and obscene publications" in the Revised Penal Code or Republic Act 8484, otherwise known as the Credit Card Law.

"Even these laws do not have enough teeth to stop cybersex operators," Meneses added. "For instance, we can only invoke RA 8484 if the suspected owner of a cybersex shop makes a money transfer from the Philippines to another bank account. Article 201 does not even mention digital mediums of pornography."

The NBI official said that the number of cybersex dens in the country has grown in the last four years, most of them owned by foreigners but managed locally by Filipinos.

Normally, cybersex operators have their computer servers hosted in the Philippines. Their "cyberbabes" stay in a secret room with an Internet camera where paying customers can watch. Payment is done via credit card to an account in a country with loose regulations on pornography.

He said the closest the legislation the agency could invoke against cybersex operators is Section 33 of the Republic Act 8792, otherwise known as the E-Commerce Act, imposing penalties on illegal transfer of data through the Internet.

Attributing the increase of cybersex operators to lack of cybersex laws, Meneses warned that the trend could continue if no law is passed against them. The NBI has been monitoring several cybersex operators in three to four areas, which he did not specify for security reasons.

Meneses added that the NBI already has a representative in the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) headquarters in Washington. Since many of the suspected operators are Americans, the FBI can conduct a similar raid in the US once the NBI targets cybersex facilities in the Philippines.

So far, two legislators have filed anti-cybersex bills, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. and Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago.

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Landing . . .

From page B8

wake up in the middle of the night with a great idea. I grab the pen and writing pad that I keep by my bed and jot it down, certain that in the morning, I'll be able to lift the thought to a whole new level. But when I look at what I wrote the next day, all that comes to mind is, "What a stupid thought! What was I thinking?" These thoughts fail because they're just not good.

2. **An unhealthy environment.** I just stated that thoughts only reach their full potential in a healthy environment. So it only makes sense that an unhealthy setting—marked by negativity, excuses, and excess stress and busyness—would be detrimental to good thinking.

In the next few issues of "Leadership Wired," I'm going to delve deeper into the subject of good thinking—why it's so valuable and how to make it happen.

Until then, begin to think of your thoughts as delicate soap bubbles—full of possibility yet always in danger of evaporating—and handle them accordingly.

Email your questions or comments to slvguru@pldtdsl.net

Former insurance boss pursues passion for invention . . .

From page B3

vest of 336 cavans. In the country, the previous record harvest per hectare was in Davao del Sur which was 290 cavans.

As for the Department of Agriculture record, the average yield per hectare in 2003 was 124 cavans for hybrid rice and 87.2 cavans for inbred rice.

Malunay says the farmer who spent about P40,000 for operating expenses, material inputs and irrigation fee, netted about P140,000 per hectare.

The expenditures, however, did not include overhead expenses like land charge and interest on capital, which could total P17,000, but still the net income is higher than the average net returns of P31,559 for hybrid rice and P15,829 for inbred rice per DA analysis in its 2003 annual report.

The chemicals supplied by Puyat, which included another chemical which the inventor said was "borrowed" from another company, were in addition to the usual fertilizers used by Gabuyo in his farm, Malunay says.

Puyat, who retired 11 years ago as head of the Manila Bankers Life Insurance Corp., says because of overuse and excessive use of various chemicals, riceland used by farmers no longer posses the vigor and freshness to sustain an abundant harvest.

The soil, he says, needs renewal. On the other hand, the rice plants need growth hormones for them to manifest their full potential for big yield, he says.

In December 2004, he came out with his product called "Xemas," a soil ameliorant that hastens decomposition of the rice hay and rice stubbles.

When decomposed, these materials, which are usually burned by farmers after harvest, comprise the equivalent of 50 kilograms of nitrogen, 80 kilograms of phosphorous and 140 kilograms of potassium for the total volume of hays and stubbles found in one hectare after harvest.

Puyat also came out with his improved formulation of his plant growth hormone. Simply labeled ANAA, it has been marketed since 1978 as a chemical for orchids.

His other chemical is "X-Rice" which contains water soluble silicon. He described it as a fertilizer enhancer that, among other things, widens the plant's passageways of fertilizers and trace elements from the roots to the leaves.

Gabuyo, a multi-awarded farmer, at once exhibited the enthusiasm to try new technologies to further improve his yield. His highest harvest that time was 13.01 metric tons (260.20 cavans) to a hectare, second only to Davao del Sur's record harvest.

Helping Gabuyo are Malunay and technician Josie Avila, who both agreed to assist and monitor Gabuyo's farming activities. Puyat supplied Gabuyo with his three chemicals, plus the "borrowed chemical," and visited him and his farms 12 times for consultations.

He also helped 30 other farmers in the city in enhancing the vigor of the growing rice plants by supplying some of the chemicals.

Gabuyo's harvests thrilled Puyat when the final tally was announced. The other 30 farmers also reported improvements in their harvests.

What pained Puyat, was the skepticism of some government officials and farmers themselves about the record harvests of Gabuyo.

"I heard some officials questioning the area used for Mr. Gabuyo's harvests. They even asked for the land titles and even said they would send their men to measure the ricelands," Puyat says.

Then the unbelieving farmers, he says, were heard saying that maybe Gabuyo's cohorts added the harvest from his other farms while nobody was looking.

"How I wish they came to congratulate Gabuyo for his feat and then study how Gabuyo did it for dissemination to other farmers," Puyat says.

Notwithstanding the skepticism, Puyat said he wrote President Macapagal-Arroyo informing her of Gabuyo's achievement and how he did it.

Philam Plans Surges Ahead in 2005!

For three consecutive years and running on an unprecedented fourth, Philam Plans, Inc. continues to lead in the pre-need industry. With total pre-need sales of **₱1.3 billion** or almost 30% of the market in the first two months alone of 2005, Philam Plans continues to be trusted by the greatest number of Filipinos for their education, pension and life needs. Data from the Actuarial Advisers, Inc. for the period reported that Philam Plans garnered an astounding 52% of the total education plan segment--more than the combined market share of all other education pre-need companies! Philam Plans continued to dominate pension plans with 22% share, making its way towards its 7th straight year of pension plan leadership! The company's share is more than twice the share of the second ranked company. For the life memorial business, the company continued to show strength as it edged upward to third place!

Strength and Stability Planholders Can Count On

In 2005, Philam Plans is set to pay a total of **₱574 million** in maturing pre-need benefits. Last April 30, Philam Plans started to pay the first tranche of education benefits worth **₱89 million** to more than 8,000 students all over the country. To ensure the complete peace of mind of its planholders, the company issues manager's checks direct to the planholder, which allows greater flexibility to suit every individual's needs. Over 3,000 Philam Plans pension planholders will receive a total of **₱331 million** from the company, securing the pension benefits of those who entrusted their hard-earned savings years ago. During these difficult times, planholders can breathe easily knowing that their savings and investments are safe and secured with Philam Plans.

Liquid and Safe Trust Fund

Philam Plans boasts of the largest, most stable and fastest growing trust fund in the industry to date. Its total trust fund of **₱15.3 billion** as of March 2005 more than covers for all the company's present and future obligations to planholders! In fact, the present trust fund levels can more than meet the programmed maturing obligations of Philam Plans of **₱9.3 billion** from 2006 to 2011.

With Philam Plans' trust fund portfolio that is highly liquid, professionally managed and safely invested, planholders are always assured that their benefits will be met and their futures will be secured.

Most Trusted Name

For 16 years, Philam Plans has become a household name for pre-need. It carries the Philam name trusted by Filipino families for its financial strength, corporate integrity and unblemished reputation in business excellence for decades. With its own expertise and professional management, Philam Plans strives to be the standard of excellence in pre-need as it provides best-selling, innovative pre-need products and services that suit the needs of Filipinos everywhere. Among Philam Plans' pre-need products with superior features and benefits trusted by Filipinos for years are the Future Fund pension plans, Gold education plans and Ultima life plans. Its new roster of affordable products, the Pangarap pension plan and the Pangako education plan, are likewise attracting interest in Filipinos determined to save for the future. With its continuous & sustained sales growth coupled with an unblemished record of promises kept, planholders can rest easy and say *"Sa Philam Plans, Panatag Ka!"*

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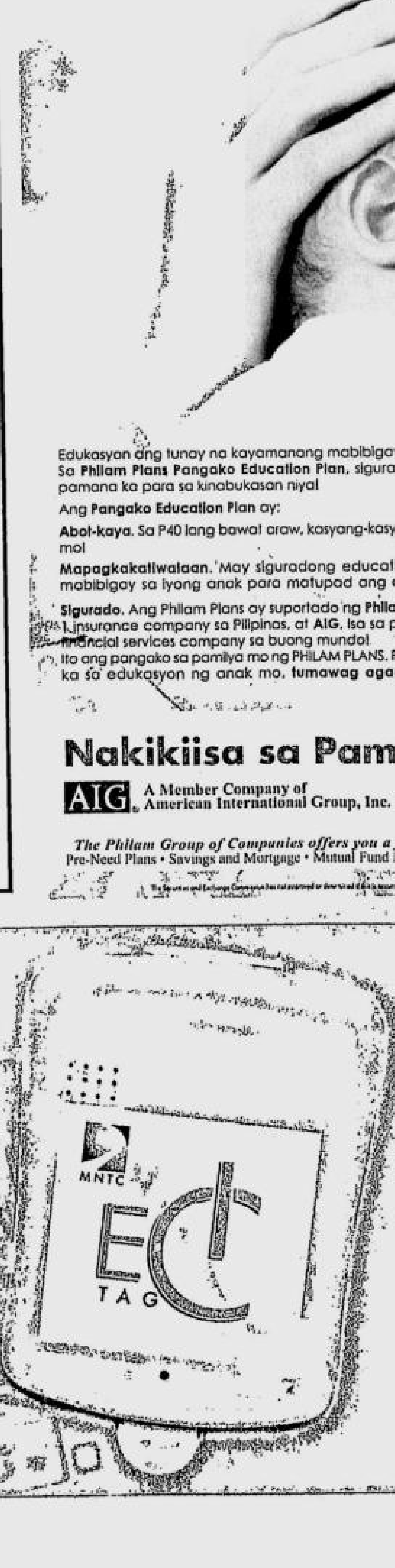

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Editor Aries Espinosa

An 'Innove-tive' link to globalization

EDUCATION enhances growth and social development, so they say. But what if education-said to be the solution to many of our country's problems, key to a better life-becomes unbelievably expensive and inaccessible to all? Sadly, however, our country still holds the record where education consistently falters every year. We see signals of strains as our educational system continues to be overburdened by the increasing enrolment as government finances fall short of funding needed improvements and the quality of instruction has gradually deteriorated over time.

For Innove Communications, improving the quality of mass education has become an economic imperative-providing hope for the youth to prepare them to be globally competitive and help uplift the quality of lives of communities by not only giving "a man a fish" or simply teaching him "how to fish" but about whether he has a "market for his catch."

Innove CEO Gil B. Genio emphasizes the role of IT in education by calling for a broadband revolution that can transform the Filipino educational system and allow the country to catch up with global competition. "It is a revolution we support and hope to see happening soon," he states. "I believe that the Internet is a great equalizer. It will give access to knowledge for all," he added.

As its name connotes, Innove (a Mexican-Spanish term which means to innovate) took the pivotal role of paving the rough roads between the "haves" and the "not haves." It continues to innovate until barriers to reaching out and connecting to practically anyone becomes possible. Barely two years old, Innove has already done remarkable strides in corporate responsibility programs, giving emphasis to three major thrusts: educational technology, that ensures the youth to acquire employable skills indispensable for employment; sustainability programs for community empowerment; and employee volunteerism by encouraging them to participate in social building by sharing knowledge through training programs.

Inching along but with perseverance to complete its vision of transforming the Philippines into an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) hub of the Asean, Innove embraces the Herculean task, a crucial role indeed. But with the best people, best team, and best practices, Innove will realize its vision in no time.

10 PCs to 5,543 schools

Under the program Gilas (Gearing-up Internet Literacy and Access to Students), Innove partnered with various organizations to connect and install 10 PCs (which includes free IP address/web site) to 5,543 schools within 5 years time. As a major contributor of this project, Innove committed to link a big chunk of the target. By year-end, Innove will fully "digitize" about 388 schools in strategic areas giving students limitless access to information and knowledge as well as provide the solution for tuition-strapped students to complete a college degree via the On-line Schooling.

Among Innove's noteworthy contribution in youth and education includes the promotion of computer literacy in public high schools nationwide; contribution to the Innove-Globe-DepEd Coalition for Better Education by hosting the ICT development in youth tech schools in Cebu and Negros Oriental provinces; support to the First National Congress on Information Communications Technology in Basic Education at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City; synergize government-academe and industry linkages as it establishes links with them through provincial telecom centers nationwide; construction of e-Centers in Cebu Normal University, Makaturing Community, etc, giving them a taste of the "generation y" learning experience. These are but the tip of the iceberg for Innove as it fuses together its resources, commitments and dedication to try and collectively become a great force for productive change.

Unlocking its local resources, the company participated in the call of the nation to alleviate poverty and uplift the living condition of the less privileged by providing not only high-technology solutions and services but has taken heart by immersing itself in programs and projects meant to improve people's lives-down to the community level. An offshoot of the Internet connectivity is the training of teachers where crash courses are offered to professionals or would-be teachers of public elementary and high schools, a company philosophy of sustaining growth by investing in its people. These livelihood and entrepreneurship trainings, which brings needed technical and managerial skills into the community, provides an alternative to agriculture, thus discouraging urban migration.

Looking forward, Innove Communications promises to aggressively pursue deployment for Internet access to meet every public high school's reliance on connectivity. Other than Gilas, Innove will continue partnering with apt organizations and local government in giving technology an edge in education in the country.

ROA SYSTEMS, BDO CAPITAL & INVESTMENT SIGN MOU

ROA Systems Co Ltd, a top Japanese contractor for IT/e-commerce projects, and BDO Capital & Investment Corp, Banco de Oro's investment arm, sign a memorandum of understanding for possible joint undertaking in e-commerce. Shown after the signing ceremony are (from left) Michael Hiroshi Oshita, information system officer, ROA Systems; Raymundo Martin Escalona, first vice president, corporate banking and financial institutions, Banco de Oro; Yoshihiro Homma, president ROA Systems; Eduardo Francisco, executive vice president, BDO Capital & Investment Corp; Tadashi Akiyama, general manager, international business division, ROA Systems, and Albert Henry Rios, assistant vice president, corporate banking group, Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

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1ST RECIPIENT OF HANDY SHREDDER AWARD

Ambrosio 'Pat' Acosta is the first recipient of the Handy Shredder Award, given in memory of the late Alex 'Handy' Reyes Jr, inventor of the Handy 4-in-1 machine. The award is bestowed to Handy 4-in-1 users who uphold the values of nurturing nature and healing the soil and teaching others to do so. Shown is Reyes' widow Nena handing the award over to Acosta. At left is Acosta's daughter Vita, while Reyes' daughter May is shown at right.

BPI pre-need firm's trust fund highly liquid at P2.5B

AYALA Plans, the pre-need company of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, recently announced in its financial report that its trust fund reserves has reached P2.495 billion as of end of 2004.

Our trust fund is highly liquid, says Ayala Plans president Emilio De Quiros Jr. The investment portfolio is invested in fixed income funds that can be withdrawn anytime to ensure liquidity at the time the planholders wish or need to avail themselves of their benefits. The bulk of the trust fund is invested in government securities and there have been no investments in real estate properties.

The P2.495-billion trust fund favorably supports the company's actuarial reserve liabilities amounting to P2.448 billion. De Quiros also adds that Ayala Plans' asset base grew to P4.536 billion from only P26.724 million when the company started 10 years ago. Paid-up capital stands at P550 million, higher than the required P100-million paid-up capitalization for pre-need companies with a three-product line offering.

Unlike other pre-need companies, Ayala Plans, since its inception, offers only fixed value plans, where cash benefits is fixed at some predetermined maturity dates. This makes it easier for Ayala Plans to manage its investments against its future cash liabilities.

As a BPI pre-need company, Ayala Plans has fully complied with regulatory requirements of various governing bodies. It has more than complied with the Securities and Exchange Commission requirements on (a) minimum capitalization of P100 million (versus actual of P550 million); (b) trust fund requirements; (c) calculation of the actuarial reserve liabilities; (d) insurance premium reserves; and (e) deferred commissions that the company has taken up in full in 2004.

Ayala Plans is also the first among pre-need companies to implement Anti-Money Laundering Act (Amla) rules and regulations as required by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. "This good-governance policy, I believe, is our strongest quality and the reason why our clients remain loyal to us", added De Quiros.

Kayaking off Puerto on way to Boracay

SOUTH Beach Caravan '05 spearheads the 1st Puerto Galera Invitational Cup Kayak Race at Puerto Galera to kick off the Summer.

South Beach Caravan '05 kicks off its exciting vacation tour with the 1st Invitational Cup Kayak Race (500m) at Puerto Galera, the first such event to be held in the island. The kayak race is but the opening salvo of other exciting events that include, among others, the Body Art (Tattoo) Competition and the ever-popular beer drinking contest.

The kayak race offers exciting prizes at stake. From Puerto Galera, the Caravan then goes to Roxas City and finally to Boracay for three days and two nights of more beach fun and surprises-all these in six thrilling summer days and nights, from May 17 to 22.

Perfect for avid "Kayakers" and beach buffs wanting to get away for the summer, this vacation caravan across land and sea also offers the choice of your perfect preferred mode of travel, be it in the privacy of your own car or in the relaxing comfort of designated tourist buses.

Brought to you by Red Hot Events & Management, in cooperation with Orange Tours & Travel, "South Beach Caravan '05", is expected not only to boost local tourism but also subsequently promote the government's "Roll-On-Roll-Off" (Ro-Ro) Inter-Island Ferry Project. Register now in the year's most exciting summer event. For details and reservations, call 924-1957, 434-3879, 436-8801 or 0926-6210439. E-mail orangetrvl@hotmail.com, or log on to www.orangetours-caravan2005.com.

*Product*FILES

Latest indoor air management system

IN THE last several years, a growing body of scientific evidence has indicated that the air within homes and other buildings can be more seriously polluted than the outdoor air in even the largest and most industrialized cities.

People who may be exposed to indoor air pollutants for the longest periods of time are often those most susceptible to the effects of indoor air pollution. Such groups include the young, the elderly, and the chronically ill, especially those suffering from respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

Fortunately, indoor air quality can be greatly improved by the use of proper indoor air management systems, which trap and remove the pollutants that build up in the air. Goodsphere (Swiss-designed technology) air revitalizing system is an all-in-one air purifier, air humidifier, air freshener (aromatherapy) and ionizer. The unit does not use chalk cartridges or chemical additives. The unit can cover an area of up to 150 sqm, while using a minimal electrical consumption of 50 to 70 watts.

Goodsphere uses botanical essences that are 100-percent biodegradable and contain anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties that bind to unpleasant odors and pollutants while purifying the air with its active ingredients. The Goodsphere Essences have been tested safe and non-hazardous in Europe (supported by Material Safety and Data Sheet, or MSDS, studies). Its anti-bacterial and anti-fungal action has undergone stringent screening by PSB Singapore, a well-known and reputable certification agency. For inquiries and a free product demo, call 373-7396, 373-7397 up to 99.

TOP MODEL TO ENDORSE FILA

iSport Life, the exclusive distributor of the prime Italian active wear brand Fila, ha recently added top male model and gym enthusiast Robby Mananquil to its roster of endorsers. Robby joins crown beauty and multi-sports fitness princess Bianca Araneta, AF3 racing champ Pepon Marave, basketball hunk JR Wacker, and tennis hotshot Chase Tinio, all of whom embrace and exude what the Fila lifestyle is all about. Robby seals his new partnership with Fila at a contract signing with Fila's special projects director Ana Bitong (left). Looking on is talent manager Celine Gavino.

Autocycle Show 2005 at Eastwood

HERE'S the best reason to get out of the house and enjoy the day and night-Autocycle Show 2005@Eastwood City. Starting May 14th until the 30th, this two-week-long affair will showcase the hottest custom cars, bikes and brand new cars. Plus, as a bonus, there will also be a technology and gadget display for those with the inclination for tech. Something for everyone all in one venue! Ribbon cutting and blessing are tentatively set on May 14 at 6 p.m. to be headed by invited guest of honor Mayor Sonny G. Belmonte, and the Eastwood leasing manager Christine San Joaquin. The event will be blessed by Rev. Fr. Peter Edward M. Lavin. The Car Show/Fashion Show is at 8 p.m. and raffle draws are from 9 p.m. onwards. For interested car dealers, car accessory shops and other exhibitors, call MexNet at 453-1159/453-1316 or 0919-5984877/Angie, 0919-3395085/Cynthia.

Bits & Clips

PhilNits deadline extended

THE PHILIPPINE National IT Standards Foundation (PhilNits) announces that the deadline for applications for the May 22 certification exams has been extended to May 16 for Manila and Cebu applicants. Applicants should personally register for the exams at the PhilNits offices in Makati and Cebu to avail of the extended deadline on May 16. May 10 is the deadline for examinees outside Metro Manila and Cebu. The next PhilNits exams are scheduled on Oct. 9. PhilNits has also allowed all examinees who failed in the previous Japanese IT standard exams to take the removal tests on May 22. However, only those who took the exams in April and October 2004 are allowed to take the removal exams. PhilNits had earlier received requests from several Tokyo-based companies to supply them with 200 PhilNits-certified IT professionals.

Photography for kids

CHILDREN as young as 7 can start learning photography. As part of its continuing photography education program, the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation, the organization behind the unprecedented growth of photography in the country, will hold a photography seminar for kids from May 10 to 12 at Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. It will be a 3-day seminar open for children from age 7 to 12. Multi-awarded and veteran photography educator Ador Pamintuan will be the lecturer. Interested parties can call FPPF at 843-5341 or 813-7420.

1st Summer Deaf Encounter

IN LINE with its goal of strengthening linkages with the public schools for the deaf in the Manila area, the De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (DLS-CSB) School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies (SDEAS) will be holding its first ever Deaf Summer Encounter from May 9 to 11 at the CSB campus in Taft, Manila. For three days, 31 participants from the Philippine School for the Deaf and Manila High School's Silahis ng Pagkakaisa Program will be participating in this enriching program, which includes classes in Filipino Sign Language (FSL) and personal safety, sports clinic and performing arts workshops. The Summer Deaf Encounter is spearheaded by the Student Activities Unit of the SDEAS' Office for Deaf Esteem and Formation (O-Deaf) in cooperation with the Catholic Ministry to Deaf People (CMDP). For more details, get in touch with overall coordinators Tess Buenaventura and Nicky Templo-Perez at pereznv@dls-csb.edu.ph.

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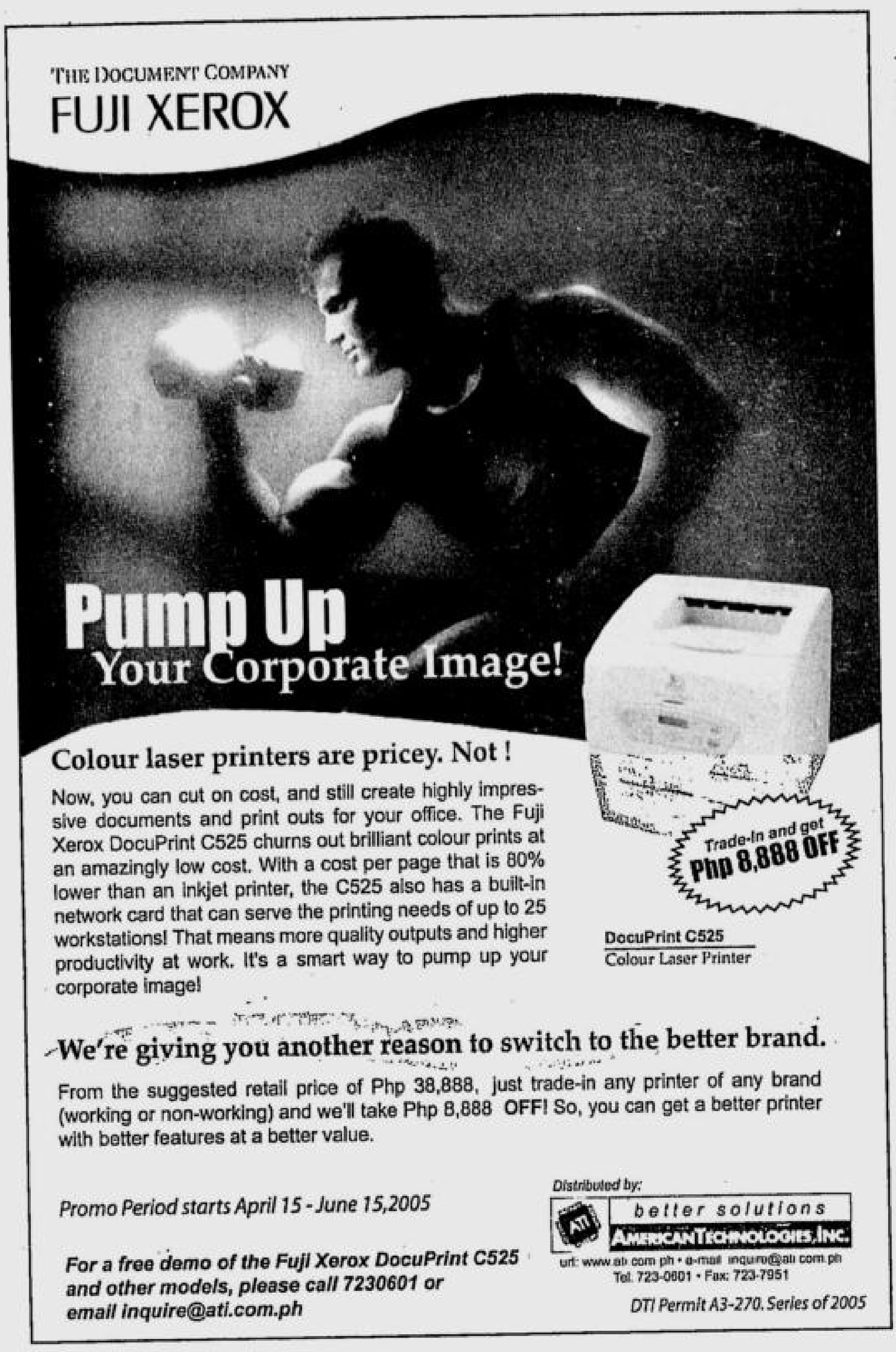

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Landing your thoughts

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

YEARS ago, a friend of mine looked at me in a meeting and made a statement that I've never forgotten. "John," he said, "ideas are like soap bubbles floating in the air close to jagged rocks on a windy day."

What a vivid picture of how incredibly frail thoughts and ideas really are! Think about it. How many times during the day does a thought pop into your head that makes you stop and say, "I really need to write that down—that's a great idea"? Now, how many of those thoughts do you actually remember and act upon? Unless you've made an intentional effort to record your ideas as they come, I'm guessing the first number is far greater than the second.

In my book, "Thinking for a Change," I talk about the importance of "landing your thoughts." I compare this process to landing an airplane. What is the first thing you do when the flight attendant announces that your plane has begun its descent? You fasten your seatbelt because you realize you could be hitting the runway hard and you don't want to get hurt.

Now, if you were really afraid of a bumpy landing, you could beg the flight attendant not to let the pilot land the plane. But, in addition to attracting unwanted attention from airline security, that would defeat the whole point of being on the airplane, which is to get you to your final destination. So you fasten your seatbelt, grit your teeth and prepare for impact.

The same principle applies to landing a thought. Any idea that remains only an idea doesn't make a great impact. The real power of an idea comes when it goes from abstraction to application. And that's where seatbelts (and perhaps some teeth-gritting) are needed. When you land a thought—either by writing it down so you can study it later or by expressing it out loud to the people around you—you're bound to get all sorts of responses. The members of your audience (including yourself) might be receptive to your thought, but they also might be confused, skeptical, hostile or indifferent.

Such reactions aren't reserved only for bad ideas. That's why it's so important to fasten your mental seatbelt before you attempt to land a thought. When an idea has potential, some part of the landing will probably be rough. But that's OK, because this process has a way of honing, strengthening and clarifying good thoughts, thereby turning them into great ideas.

With that in mind, here are four observations about thinking that may help you hang tough when you're trying to land a thought.

1. **Thoughts never begin fully formed.** I don't know about you, but I've never had a complete idea come to me immediately. This certainly would be a more efficient way of thinking, but it simply doesn't work that way.

2. **Thoughts take time and others to reach their potential.** Notice I didn't say it takes time or others to develop a thought. It takes both. Thought maturation works best when it occurs over time and with input from other informed, thinking people.

3. **Thoughts are very fragile in the beginning.** The quote from my friend says it all.

4. **Thoughts only reach their full potential in a healthy environment.** In this kind of setting, criticism is constructive, not destructive. Hard questions are asked to clarify and define an idea, not to attack it or tear it apart. Thoughts may be challenged, but the overall atmosphere is positive, not negative. Even if you're completely prepared for bumpy thought landings, there will always be times when your thoughts crash and burn on impact. In other words, they fail to survive the landing process. Here are two reasons why.

1. **They're not good thoughts.** I sometimes

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TAGBILARAN-BASED artist Nelia Lungay

STORY ON PAGE C2

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Cindy Kurleto, model/actress/VJ

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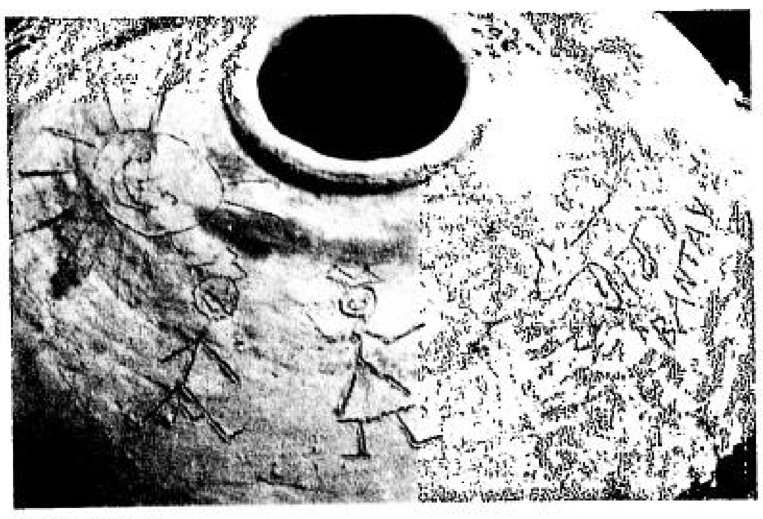


JAR drawings

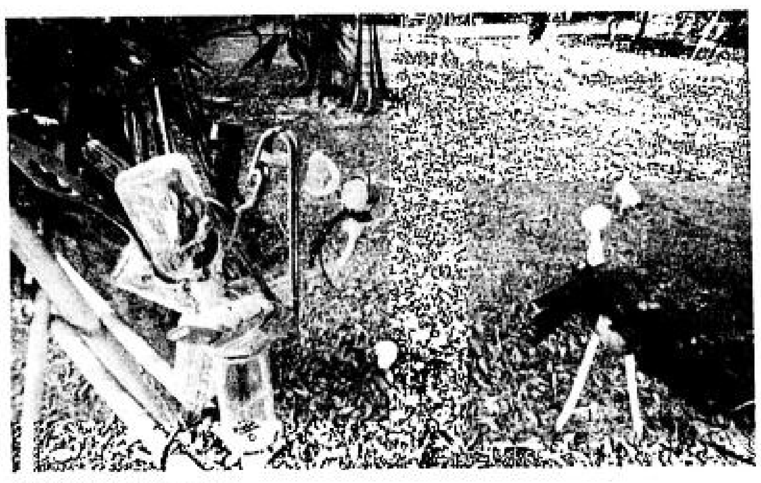
NELIA Lungay's "In the Beginning Was the Void"

GLASS sculpture teeters on bamboo pole.

THE TERRA-COTTA works after firing

Terra cotta town rises in Dumaguete

By Dessa Quesada
Contributor



COMPETITION site

KITTY Taniguchi's portrait

CONSIDER the earthly terra cotta. It's one of the most time- and labor-intensive mediums for an artist. Its outcome is virtually unpredictable, and cracks almost inevitable. It has been brushed off, literally and figuratively, simply as dirt, or even more to the point, "*putik lang yan!*" (that's just mud). The medium in focus is the humble clay, commonly associated with flower pots and huge water jars, and certainly one that engenders a roster of challenges to those it beckons.

The challenge of terra cotta has led to a recent convergence of artists in Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental, dipping their creative hands into shaping mud, and transforming the enchanting Mariyah Gallery into a virtual fort of mammoth and medium-size sculptural works, to be exhibited in time for the opening of the First Dumaguete Open Biennial Terra Cotta Arts on May 14.

Heralded as the first of its kind in the country, perhaps even the world, the forthcoming Terra Cotta Arts Festival will be a major event drawing participants from various parts of the Philippines.

The festival has become a much-anticipated addition to the mosaic of cultural initiatives gestated, born and nurtured in the city of Dumaguete, and the buzz has reverberated from north to south.

Festival director and multimedia artist Danni Sollesta, who in the last year spearheaded with widely acclaimed Kitty Taniguchi, Dula sa Lapuk (Playing with Mud) terra cotta workshops in Dumaguete and San Carlos
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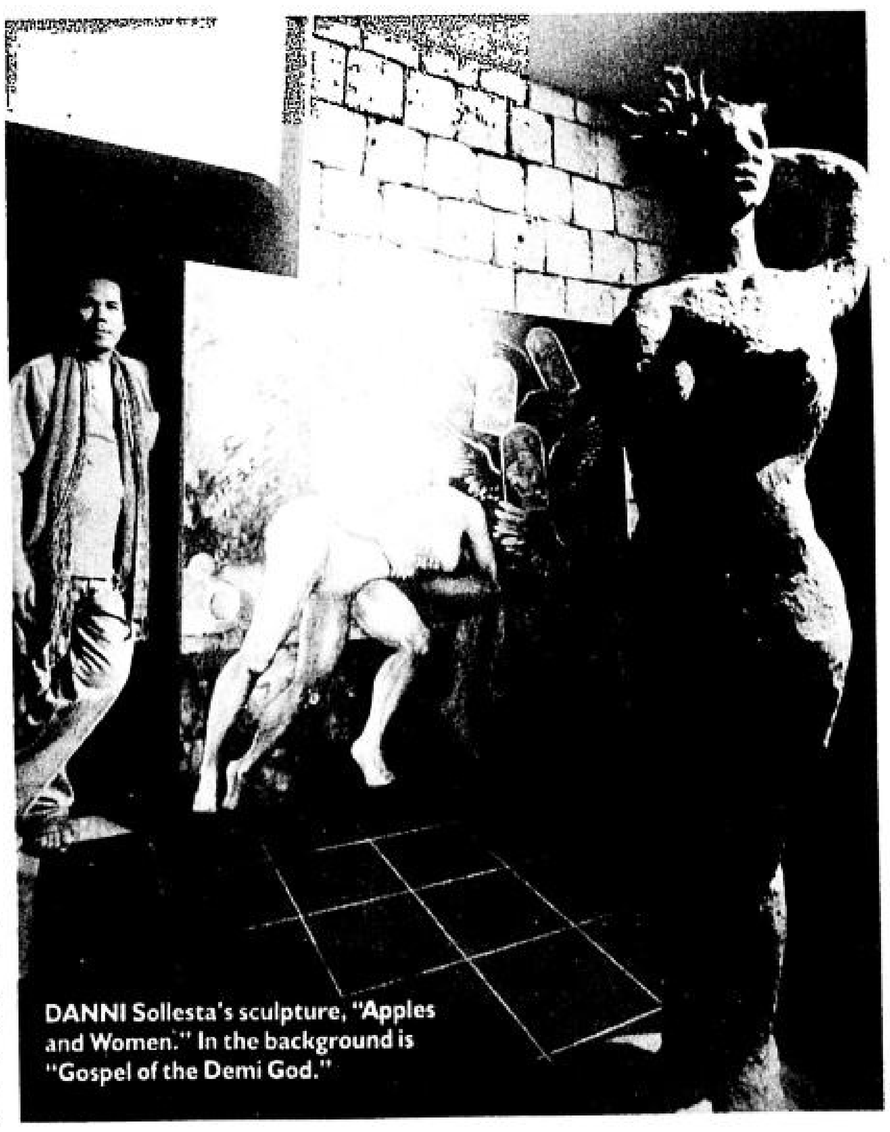
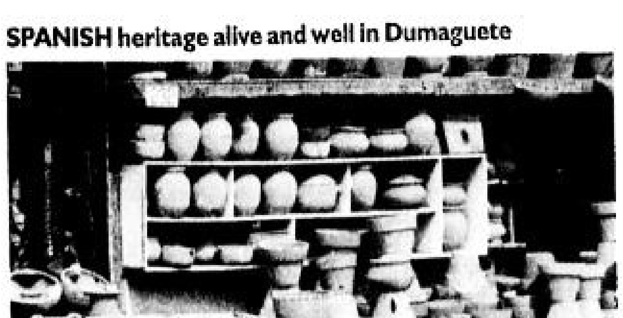


DANNI Sollesta's sculpture, "Apples and Women." In the background is "Gospel of the Demi God."

NEGROS artists play local instruments.

PHOTOS: MELVYN CALDERON

SPANISH heritage alive and well in Dumaguete



THROUGH the years, an area of the city known as Claytown, now Daro, has been the source of clay items for both kitchen and garden use.

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cities, says things just fell in- unfolding of this festival.

ct also emerged due to a col- of potters, artists, and oth- who occasionally cross artistic address the disintegration of a thriving and vibrant com- ard potters in Dumaguete.

years, an area of the city town, now Daro, had the on of being the source of an ay items for both kitchen and

ea is swiftly being displaced and commercial buildings, nity of potters, lacking in in- pport, are sadly stuck in anti- luster molds of design, lead- generating local industry.

naguete Open Biennial Terra l envisions an event that will enewed appreciation of terra the uplifting of awareness n the local community about d rich value of terra cotta, an urce found in abundance in the Negros island.

eeks to push the boundaries rra cotta beyond the limits of rpretations of craft and art by cative venue for experimen- as, materials and processes, fusing new creative energy rra cotta industry.

itty, the tireless sibling-team of the festival, explained: "We he need to work with aesthet- of the goals in the craft. We ff the notion that terra cotta pped for high art."

es and Women" (part of a se- tled Mythology"), and Kitty's Flight of the Wingless Crow," a towering 9-ft tall crow's of the works foregrounding

artists are drawn to the festi- rra cotta as medium for their ngs.

sed artist Nelia Lungay, lge about terra cotta came at the Design Center of the plains that the attraction to ner hinges on the repetitive- ess, especially the kneading.

g, quieting, introspective, a ink about thoughts you nor- k about," Lungay said. "It al- ate feel, sinking your hands t's so primal. The process in- lements—earth, water, wind g it so close to nature."

women's experiences, Lun- lude "In the Beginning Was ptures of several half-bodied en torsos, the artist's tribute cially mothers who are often d. "The Nurturer" is another e depicting the goddess

rength

nila curator Bobi Valenzuela brightest discoveries of the e," Mark Valenzuela, once an engineering major at the Silliman University, wrote a thesis on the industrial strength of terra cotta years ago.

"The medium is interesting because it is a long process. Unlike the flat surface of painting, three-dimensional figures have a special appeal," Valenzuela said. "It is very exciting because you cannot predict the outcome, you might think it is done after making the figures, but it will still be transformed after the firing. The accidental elements become an integral part of the artwork."

His work is titled "War Games"—musings on the soldiers' life, especially non-commissioned officers whom he says are unable to use their own reason, acting out like mere puppets.

Mark hopes the festival will also give local artists a rare chance to be recognized outside Dumaguete.

Though much of the creative energy resonates at the Mariyah Gallery, the whole city is conspiring to make the Terra Cotta Arts Festival a success. The project earned the nod and sponsorship from the City Government of Dumaguete, with backing from Mayor Agustin Perdices and the chair of the City Tourism Council, Glynda Descuatan, who agreed to serve as the executive director and chair of the festival.

Indigenous to the Philippines, terra cotta is a tedious but malleable art form

"SUNDALONG Kanen"

FIRING the terra cotta artworks involves patience.

Silliman University will provide the venue for the competition and exhibition, as well as board and lodging for some of the contestants.

Foundation University will offer fully equipped space for the lectures as well as accommodations for participants.

Support from the Provincial Cultural Committee of Negros Oriental allows for artists to fly in, including National Artist Napoleon Abueva, who heads the team of jurors for the May 13 competition and will grace the grand opening on May 14 as speaker.

The Cultural Heritage Foundation of the Philippines has included the festival in its calendar of arts festivals in the country, while the city's illustrious Spanish Heritage has organized an exhibition of traditional works of Daro potters.

Ultimately, this endeavor is about leaving a legacy in our culture. For who knows, like the most significant archeological 20th-century excavations in China that unearthed life-size terra cotta figures of warriors and horses arranged in battle formations, dating as early as 211 BC, these sculptures may very well outlive this generation to reveal, centuries later, the persistence of an aesthetic imperative that transformed terra cotta on the island of Negros Oriental.

For more information, call (035)225-1687, or e-mail Christina_Taniguchi@yahoo.com or kittymariyah@lycos.com.

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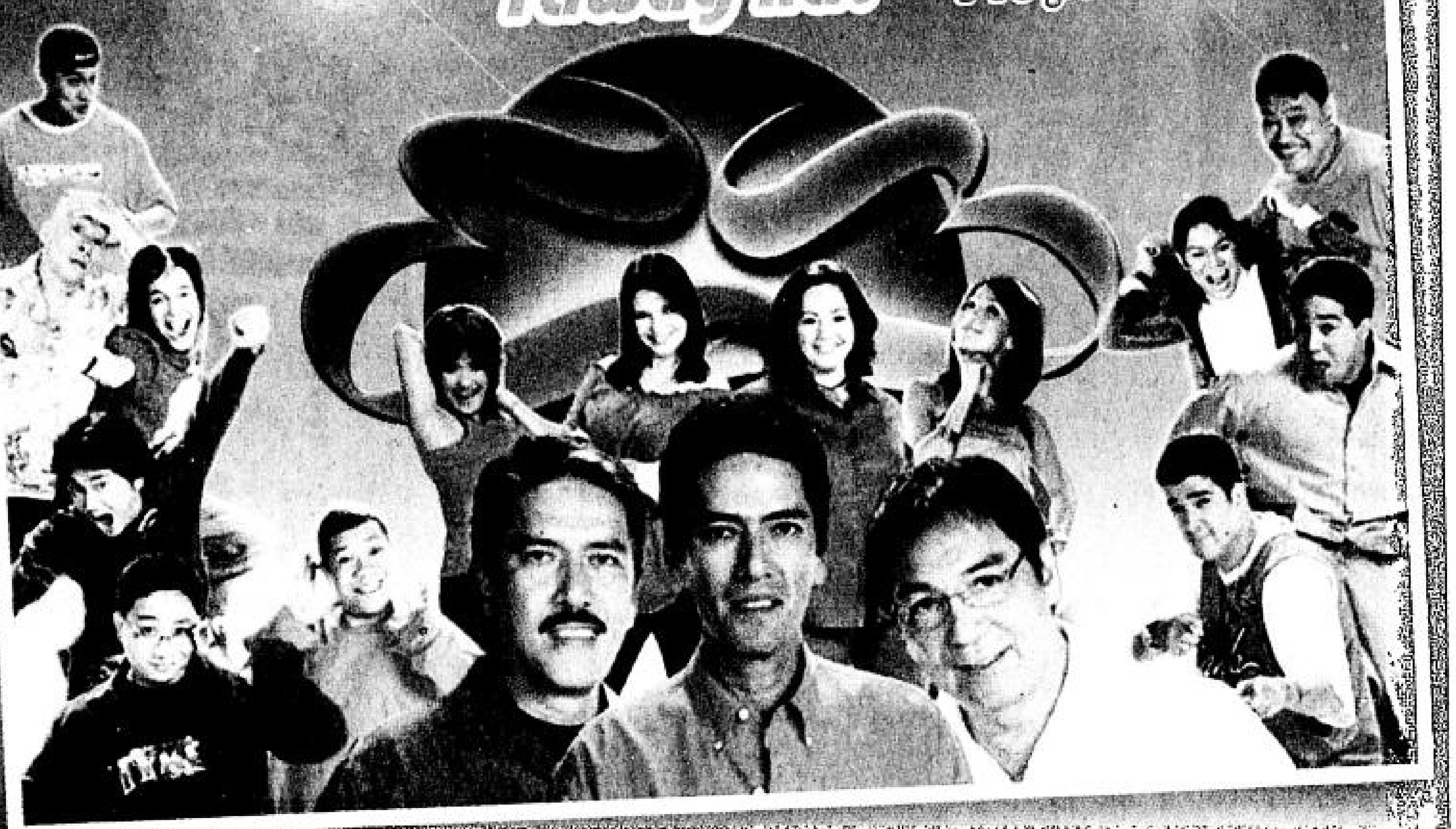

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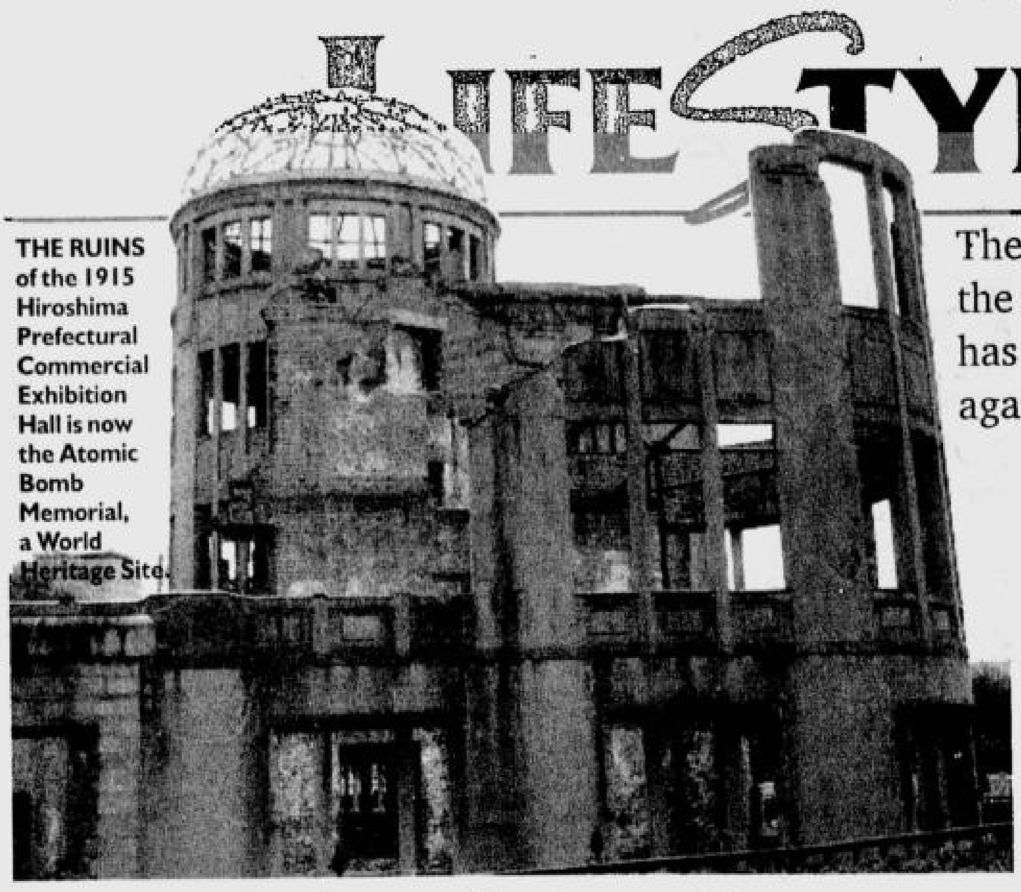


THE RUINS of the 1915 Hiroshima Prefectural Commercial Exhibition Hall is now the Atomic Bomb Memorial, a World Heritage Site.

The first city to experience the fury of the atom bomb has become a memorial against the inhumanity of wars

Hiroshima's heritage of peace

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

ALMOST 60 years ago, at 8:15 on the morning of August 16, 1945, a uranium-type atomic bomb equivalent to 15 kilotons of TNT was dropped over the heavily populated commercial area of Hiroshima. The mushroom-shaped cloud was a decisive maneuver that led to the surrender of Japan, leading to the end of World War II in the Asia-Pacific region, and to consequently establishing a period of US occupation in Japan.

The bomb exploded approximately 589 meters above the center of an unaware, unprepared Hiroshima. In a blinding, horrifying instant, the explosion reduced an entire city to scorched rubble, a tragedy of a magnitude never experienced before by the world.

Around 140,000 lives were lost. Among the survivors, the atomic bomb showered high levels of radiation that destroyed cells and tissues deep in the bodies. Radiation effects continue to threaten the health and psychological state of those who remain alive today.

Hiroshima, built on a river delta in southeastern Japan, prospered during the Edo Period (1603-1868) and developed into the largest castle town in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions. After the Meiji restoration in 1868, the city became the capital of Hiroshima Prefecture.

By the 1930's, the city had developed into a major military center where many army facilities were located. It was central during the Japanese war on the Chinese mainland triggered by the Manchurian Incident that developed into a full-scale war with China in 1937. After its 1941 entry into World War II, the Japanese government shifted civilian factories in Hiroshima to military production, developing it into an important source of war material and logistics. The most important military base in western Japan and a major naval port were established in the Hiroshima Bay area.

EXHIBIT in the Peace Memorial Museum recreates the horror of the 1946 bombing explosion in Hiroshima.

Aside from being a military center, the city had another face. It was a major educational center. Inaugurated in 1902, the prestigious Hiroshima Higher School of Education was the second school of its caliber in the country, the first being in Tokyo. Soon other institutions of higher learning located in the city, establishing Hiroshima as an important educational center for Japan.

Despite its rich history, Hiroshima is an international icon today because of the bomb. Research indicates that the actual point where the a-bomb exploded was approximately 300 meters southwest of the Aioi Bridge at the confluence of the Motoyasu and Honkawa Rivers in the business center of Hiroshima, the hypocenter of the explosion.

The intense heat burned nearly all buildings within a 2-km radius of the hypocenter. One of the very few buildings to survive the blast was the Hiroshima Prefectural Commercial Exhibition Hall, completed by the Czech architect Jan Letzel in 1915. The gracious, western-style domed building was a symbolic source of pride for the people of the city.

The structure, standing only 160 meters northwest of the hypocenter, was heavily damaged by the blast, then burned from the ceiling down by the instant ignition of fire from the bomb's heat rays killing all its occupants. However the middle section of the building under the central dome remained standing.

For many years after the war ended, the city was undecided about what to do with the structure, allowing it to deteriorate until deciding to preserve the ruins in 1966. The ruins were stabilized twice, in 1967 and 1987, both times as the beneficiary of a massive international fund drive that paid for the reinforcement of the structure.

In 1996, UNESCO inscribed the site on the World Heritage List as the "Hiroshima Peace Memorial," a monument in silent testimony to the horror and tragedy of nuclear weapons that "must be preserved to teach future generations the sanctity of peace."

After the bombing, Hiroshima launched a campaign that led to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law stipulating that Hiroshima would be rebuilt to embody the "human striving for peace."

The law further required that the Nakajima District near the hypocenter be preserved in perpetuity as a symbol of peace. The district was developed into the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park where the A-Bomb Memorial, the Cenotaph commemorating the victims, and the Peace Memorial Museum stand amid a vast, triangular landscaped area bounded by the juncture of the two rivers flowing through central Hiroshima.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum is a timelessly elegant building designed by the Japanese master architect, Kenzo Tange. It is where the Hiroshima story unfolds, with dioramas depicting the horrors of the explosion. Scale models show in minute detail the extent of urban destruction, bringing to life large photographic panoramas of Hiroshima before and after the bombing.

Personal belongings of victims gathered at the bomb site after the explosion tell the poignant story of survivors searching for any signs of parents, children, and friends whose bodies or ashes were never identified or found after the blast. The futility of that search was brought home by a large display of assorted children's shoes gathered from the devastated city, charred lunchboxes dropped by students, a burned schoolgirl's uniform and other personal items.

Other exhibits showed failed rebars, crushed bricks, twisted doors and windows, sections of broken pavement, melted bottles, a section of wall streaked by "black rain" of radioactive material that followed the explosion, and life-sized models of destroyed building sections, all artifacts illustrating the horrible devastation and suffering the bomb caused to Hiroshima.

Written communication from the American military, now declassified, about the decision to drop the bomb is on view. There are letters from Japan and from all over the world written in search of lost relatives, to express support for devastated Hiroshima, or to voice the belief in the uselessness of war.

The museum exhibit ends with closure. An exhibit of origami cranes folded by children as they recuperated from radiation effects in a hospital establishes rays of hope.

Panels repeat the commitment of Hiroshima to advocate for the ban on nuclear weapons as a means of achieving not only world peace but also peace of mind in the haunted psyche of a city victimized by World War II.

For Hiroshima, the Peace Memorial Museum brought closure.

To me, born at the end of World War II and having experienced the war only through stories of family and friends, the museum experience brought back their stories of horror as the victims of war.

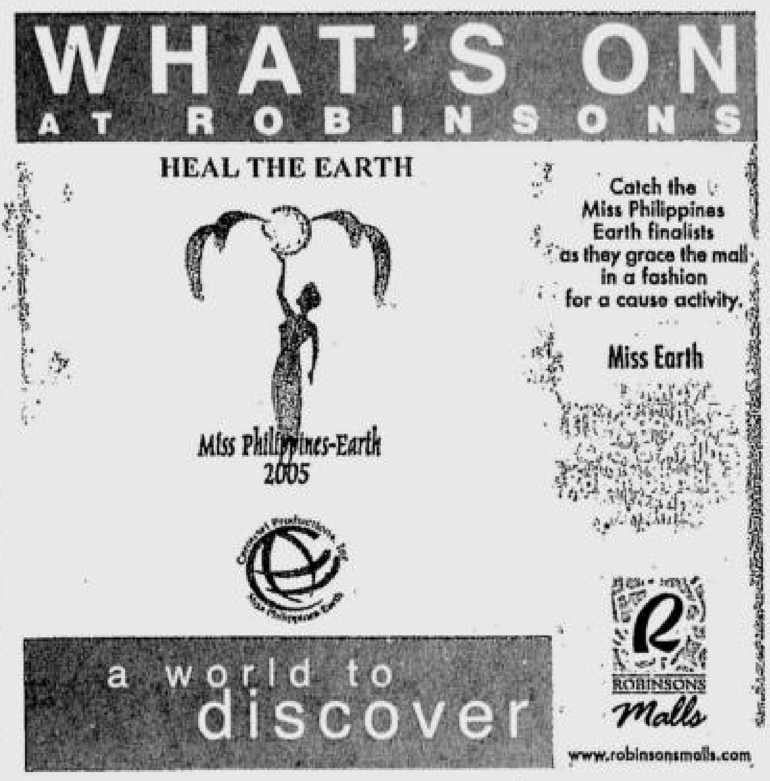
Although I agree with the senselessness of war, I found no closure for those who were the victims on the other side.

History has many versions, I found out in Hiroshima, with each version taking on the color of its narrator.

Heritage watch

The death of architect Honrado Fernandez leaves an irreplaceable void in the Philippine arts and culture sector where he was one of its prime movers.

HIROSHIMA'S/D4



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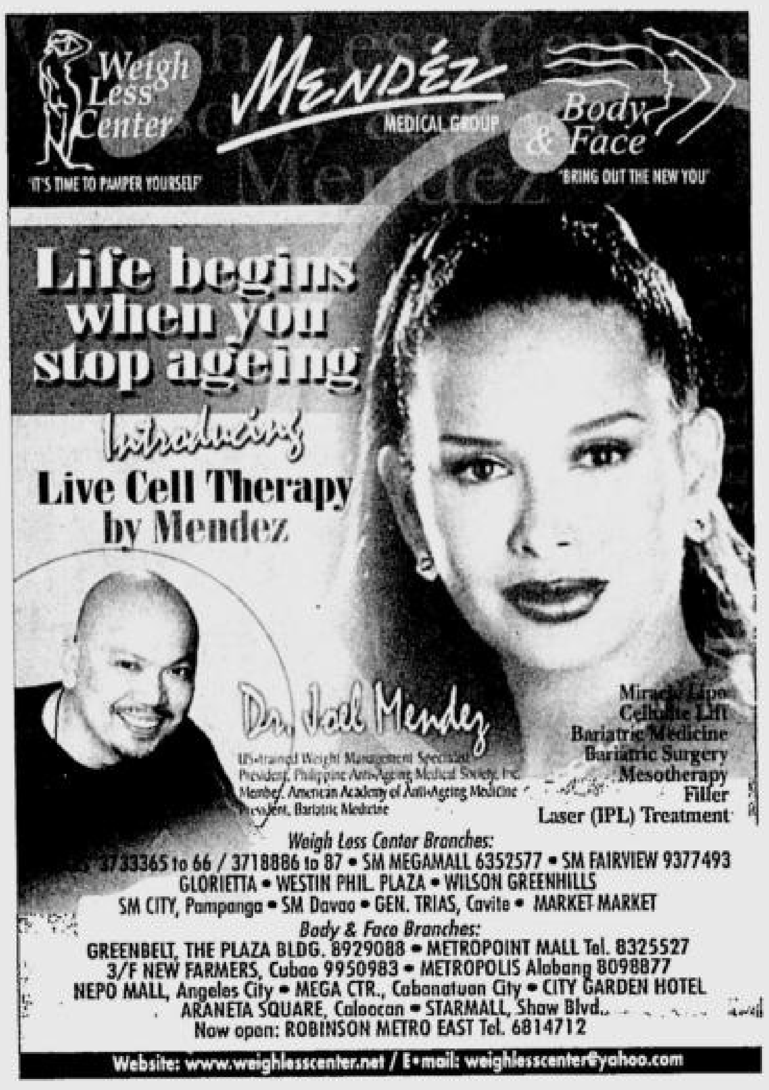

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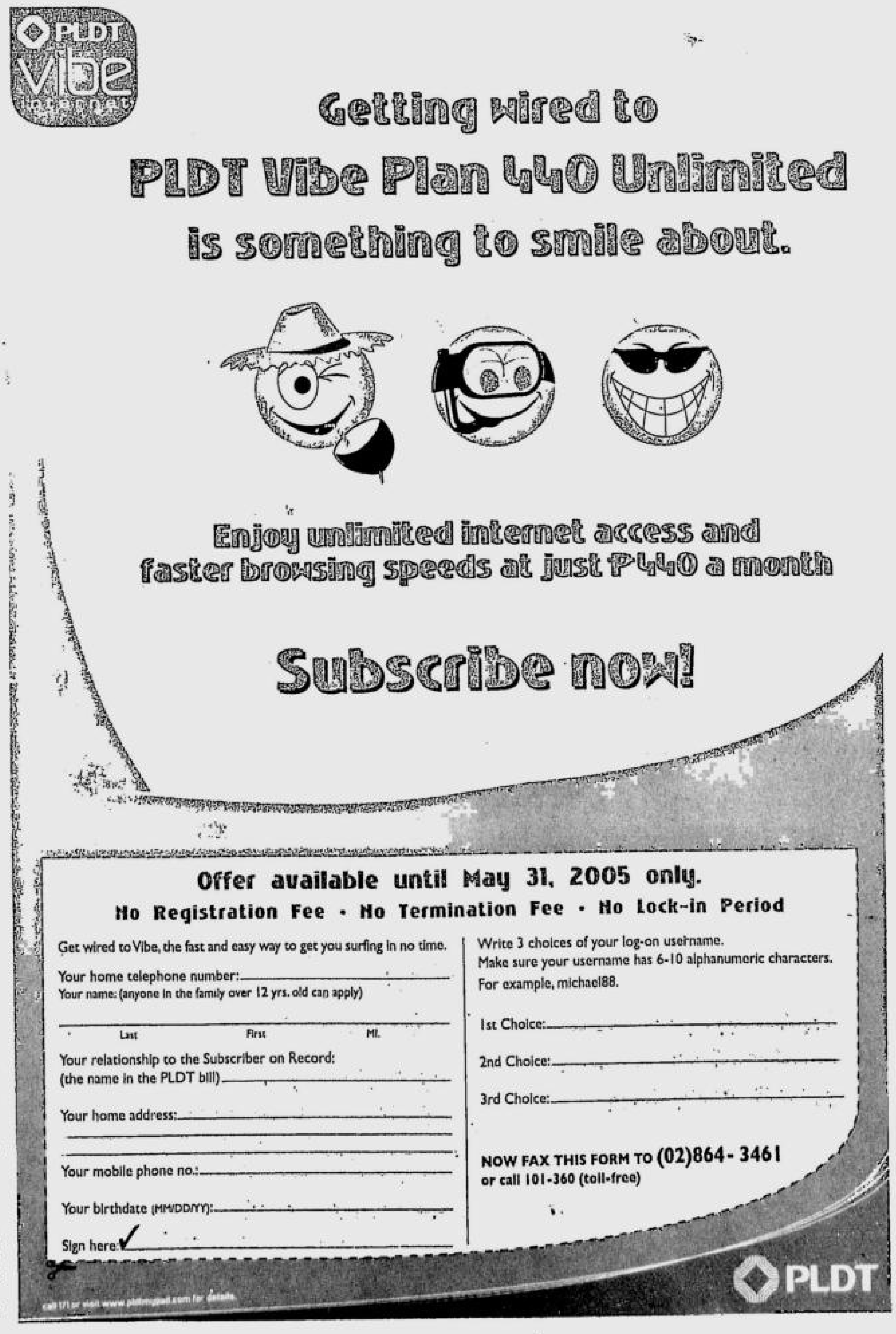

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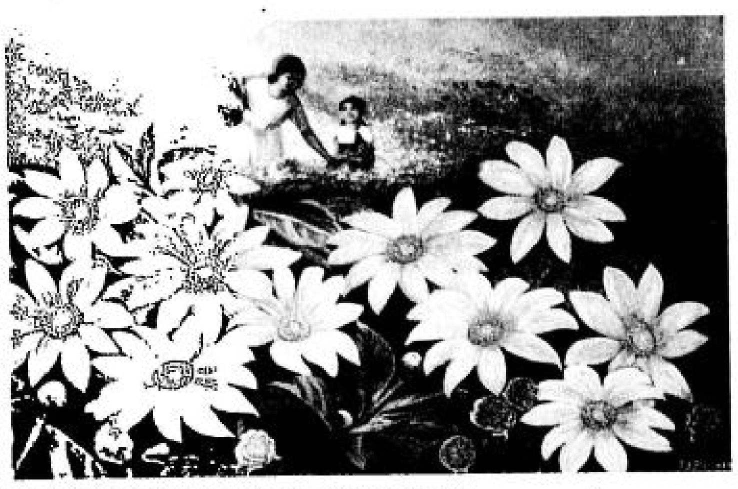
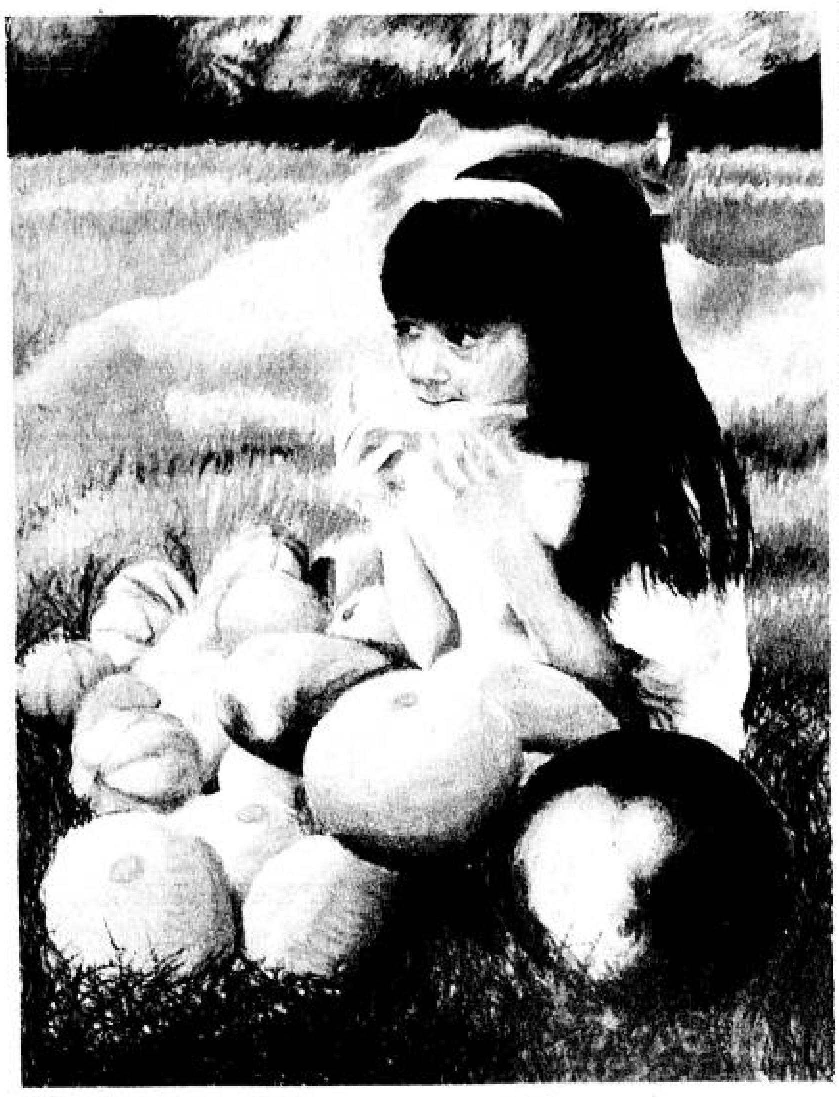


"SUNFLOWERS," by Rosemarie S. Blanco

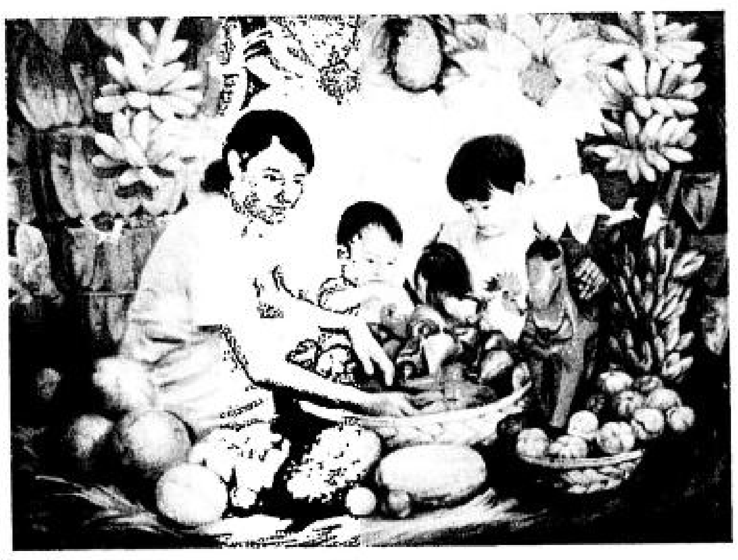
Blanco family of artists exhibit at the Big Apple

THE BLANCO family headed by Jose V. Blanco and wife Loring, will hold a painting exhibit at Philippine Center Art Gallery, New York City, US on June 5-16. The exhibit marks the 107th anniversary of Philippine Independence. The Foundation of Filipino Artists Inc., the Philippine Consulate General and the Philippine Center in New York sponsor the exhibit.

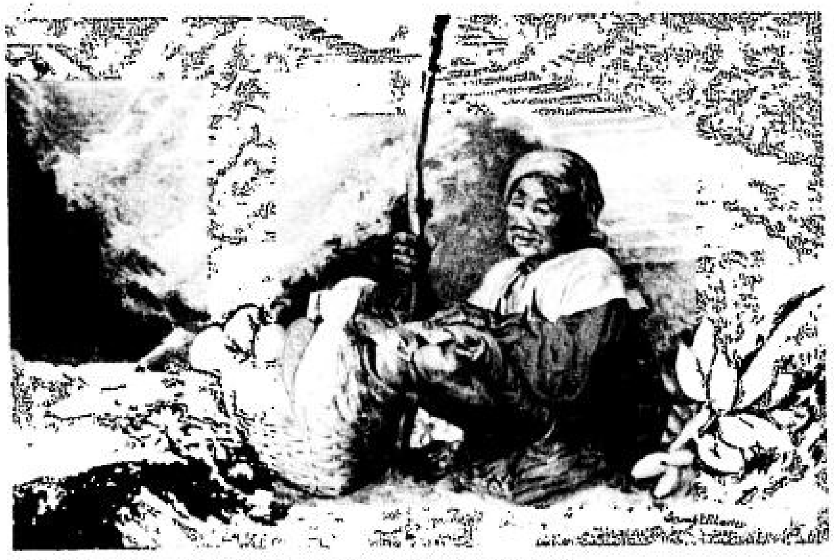
The exhibit features the works of Jose Pitok Blanco, Loring, Glenn, Noel, Michael, Joy, Jan, Gay, Peter Paul and grandchildren, a new addition to the family of artists.



"THE FARMER'S Daughter," by Rose Sienna T. Blanco



"LUCBAN Festival," by Jose V. Blanco



"EIGHTH Wonder of the World," by Loreto P. Blanco

Notes on orchestra

By Sid Gomez Hildawa
Contributor

CURATING a group exhibition is like orchestrating an ensemble of musicians, each with his or her own instruments and style of playing.

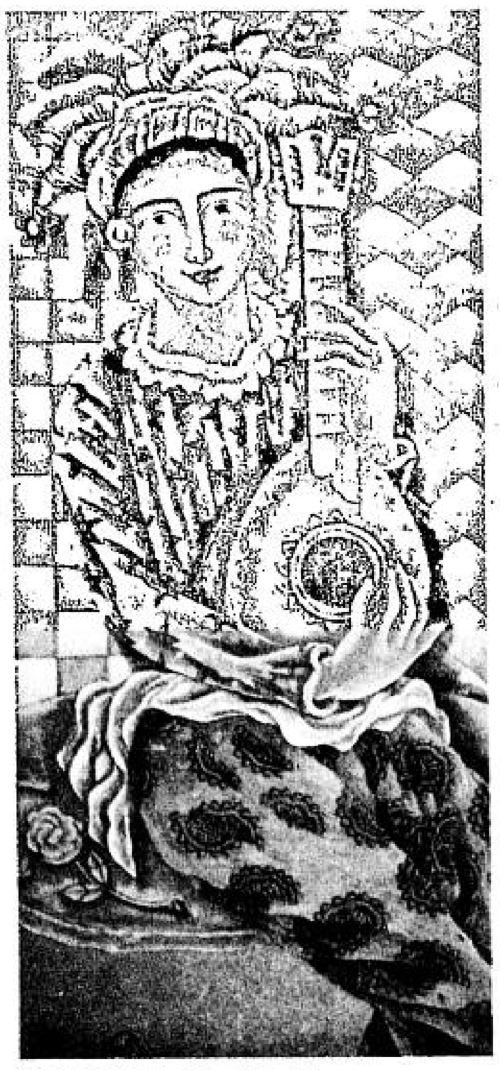
In the case of "La Musique," this comparison operates in both the figurative and literal level, because the artworks here, while being visually musical in themselves, are also about music, musicians and their instruments.

The problem thus posed to the curator is akin to that of a score arranger or orchestra conductor: how to best organize the various players and their individual contributions so that they collectively evoke harmony rather than cacophony.

Being an artist myself and an architect (with some formal training in classical music), I approached the challenge in a number of ways.

The first approach was architectural; we painted two horizontal bands traversing the

"THE CELLIST," b



"MUSIC II," by Mario Parial

"GITARISTA," by

Feati architecture students win awards

FOR EXHIBITING expertise in structure replication, photojournalism and crayola painting, six architecture students from the Feati University bagged the first and second places at the recent United Architects of the Philippines Student Auxiliary's 9th National Congress in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Rolly Astorga Tarroja, Rodolfo Mamagat, Charlie Lopez and Louelle Anthony Zapata won first place in structure replication of the United Architects of the Philippines' Building Contest. They produced a scale model using recycled straws, barbecue sticks and used illustration boards.

Caroline Capadosa's series of seven photos about the 31st UAP National Convention theme, "Students as future architects," received the highest prize for the photojournalism contest. In the crayola painting contest, Irene Adique won second place for her rendition of the congress' venue, the Chateau Royal Golf Course and Country Club. Aside from medals and certificates, the winning students received architectural books, magazines and supplies.

UAP president Enrique Olonan led the panel of judges for the competitions.

Apart from various contests, the event featured lecture-seminars by architects and educators, including Feati College of Architecture and Fine Arts dean Joycelyn Mananghaya, who spoke on heritage structure conservation.

A total of 131 student delegates from 21 privately owned and state universities and colleges nationwide participated in the annual activity.

Valdizno and Biglang-awa at West, Saturday Group at Gat

MAYOR Sonny Belmonte poses with Franklin Caña Valencia (left), the Quezon City High School distinguished alumnus for visual arts. Valencia is an officer of the Saturday Group.

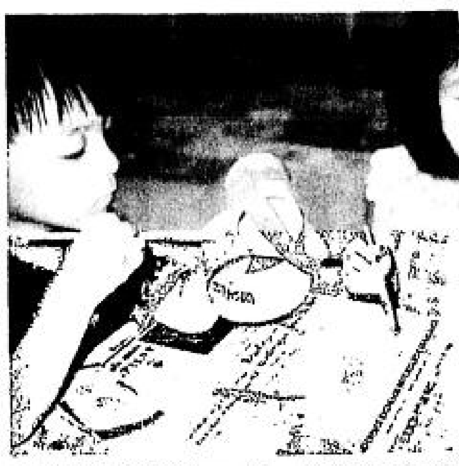
VISUAL ARTS

TREK Valdizno tests his skills and the scope of his imagination in "Blind Paintings," in which he relies mostly on intuition and past experience to create new avenues of expression. On view on May 10-28 at West Gallery, West Avenue, QC, the exhibit features Valdizno's latest large-scale works in enamel and varnish on canvas. Call 4110336 or 4119221.

IS HISTORY shaped by what we remember? Pablo Biglang-Awa Jr. explores this question visually in "In the Shadow of memory." On view on May 12-24 at West Gallery in SM Megamall A are the artist's recent painterly snapshots of the world. Call 6341284.

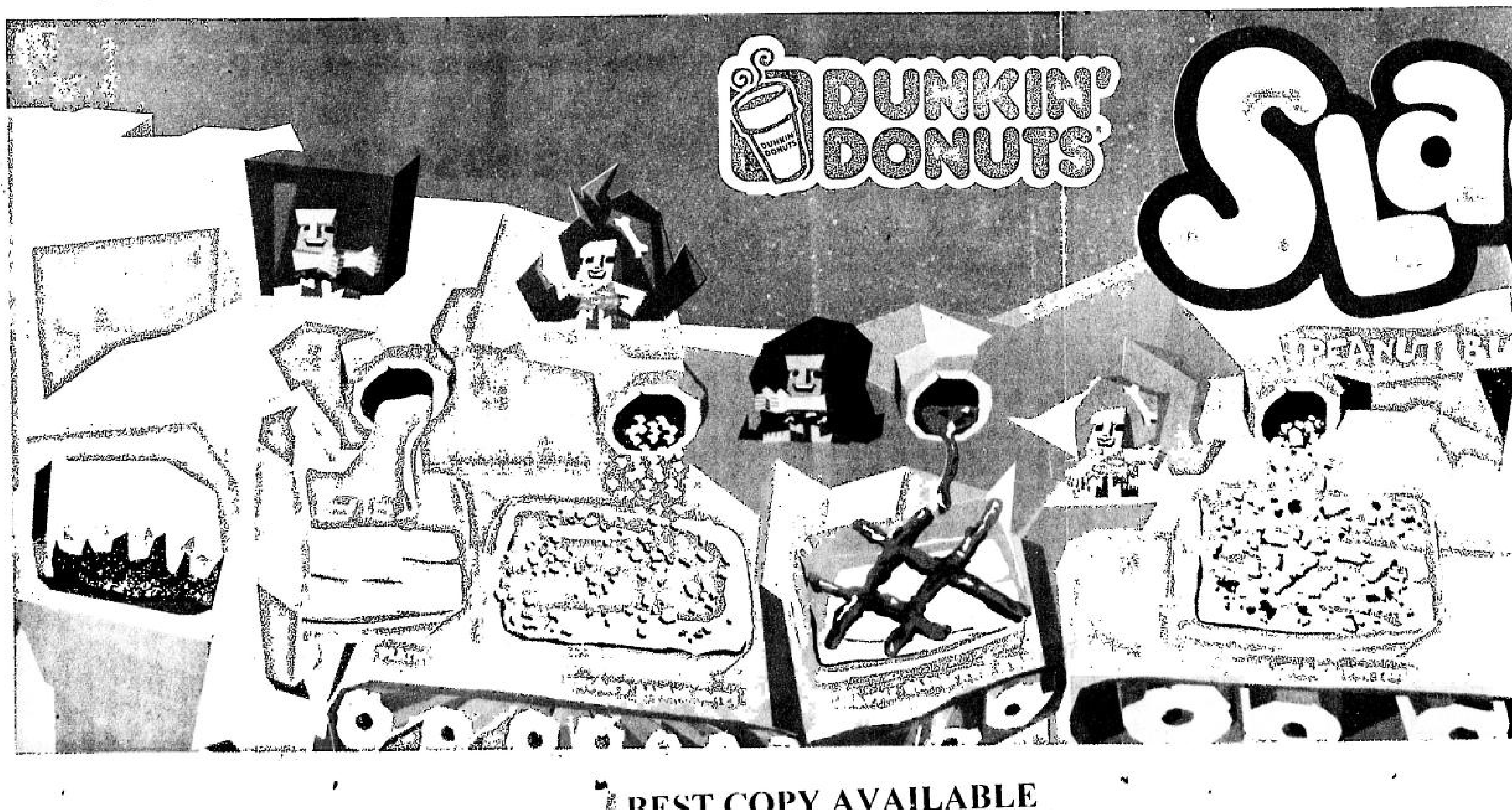
GATEWAY Mall mounts The Saturday Group's "May Flower Festival" until May 31 at 1/L, Activity Center, Araneta Center, QC. The exhibit features the works in oil, acrylic and watercolor of Malang, Cris Cruz, Remy Boquiren, Lydia Velasco, Frank Cana, Buds Convocar, Merci Melchor, Ernie Patricio and Ben Infante.

RICCO-RENZO Galleries features Danny Sillada's "Everything and Nothingness" starting May 26 at LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. His works have evolved into more abstract and contemplative forms and images. His canvases are filled with Rorschach-like ink-blot images. Call 8982542 to 43.



CHILDSTART International's "I Am An Ar held on May 11-13, at Ayala Museum Spac Wing entrance, Greenbelt 4. The exhibit is culmination of a six-week art program desi helping children discover and appreciate t creative talents. Call 757117 to 21.

THE ALLIANCE Française's Total Gallery prese Schar's "Phases and Fragments" until May 27. Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. His works



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ating a musical exhibit

y Andi Cubi

Bernard Vista

major walls of the exhibition space, using an off-white shade that was discernible yet unobtrusive.

While alluding to staves used in musical notation, these bands also serve to multiply a blank wall's implied horizon, so that the paintings can be hung in varying heights, like melodic notes scaling up and down a musical staff.

Next, we gathered the artworks in various groups: one grouping portrayed musical instruments without human figures; other groupings were based on the kind of instrument depicted, whether it was a violin or cello, a guitar, a flute or pipe, or a keyboard. It was like partitioning an orchestra into sections for wind, brass and strings, with abstract works serving as percussion.

The final step was the fun part, because it involved the arrangement of works against the walls as a musical sheet, so to speak. Without being literally notes on a page, the paintings nevertheless had to interact with each other individually like melodic strings, or simultaneously like chords.

As in music where the silence between the notes is as important as the notes themselves, the spaces between and around the paintings were crucial, too.

Although Galerie Joaquin is a lot more spacious than most galleries in town, its walls are not limitless so we still had to edit out some works, which don't reflect on their merits but rather on the overall composition of the ensemble. Even in an orchestra, not all the instruments play all of the time. (We nevertheless endeavored to have all of the artworks represented in the catalogue.)

In art, as in music, we each have our preferences and biases. In my own practice as visual artist, and in my work as director for visual arts at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, my leanings are toward experimental and multimedia works, which doesn't mean that artworks in conventional media are less creative or less exploratory.

On the contrary, paintings in oil and acrylic have persisted because our artists continue to innovate in terms of nuances in imagery, signification, and handling of materials.

Curating "La Musique" has given me the opportunity to better appreciate the inroads our established and younger artists have made (with or without institutional support) in their commitment to keep renewing their creations, and thereby contribute to the grand symphony that is Philippine contemporary art.

Hildawa is assistant artistic director of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. "La Musique MMV" will run from May 10-24 at Galerie Joaquin-Podium. Call 6347954.

eway, Sillada at Ricco-Renzo

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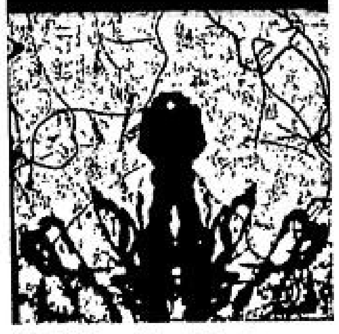
termediary spaces that separate one object from another. Call 8957585 or 8957441.

FINALE Art Gallery showcases Trek Valdizno's "Surface Tensions," on May 12-24 at 4/L, Megamall A. The works are in oil on canvas of variable sizes. The abstract imagery has a sensuous feel to it. Red is a dominant color, rich, powerful and passionate. Call 6342410 or 6342411.

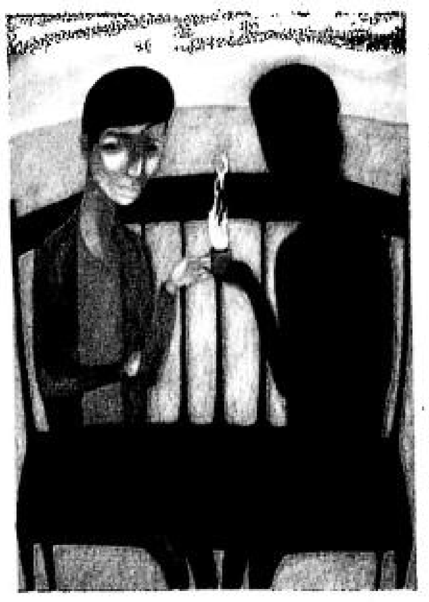
POSITIVISM Art Gallery presents "Flowers for the Mother and Child" starting May 17, at Enterprise Plaza, 1429 Pablo Ocampo St., Barangay San Antonio, Makati City. The group painting exhibit features flowers and mother and child. Call 8112432 or 0927-5522288.

THE LOPEZ Memorial Museum will hold a painting workshop on May 18-20, 10 a.m.-12 noon. Workshop facilitator Wayie Canoy will explore the relation of painting and music in terms of color, texture and movement. The museum is at G/L, Benpres Bldg., Exchange Road corner Meralco Ave., Pasig City. Call 6312417.

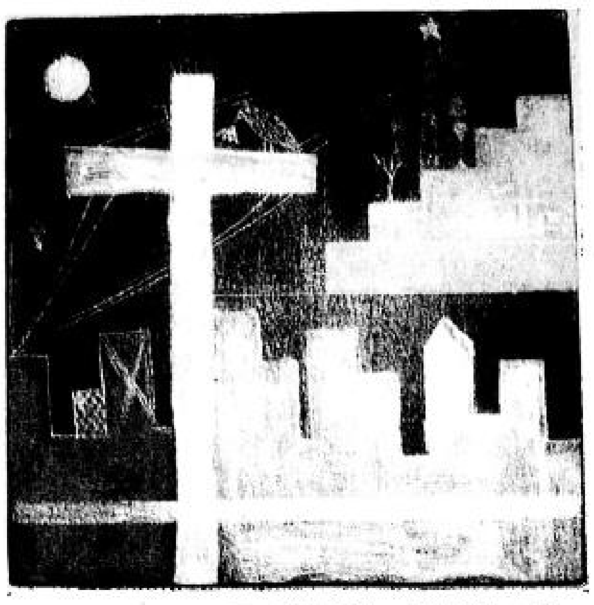
THE ALCOVE Photo Gallery offers Lighting for Portraiture workshop by Jay Alonzo on May 21 and 28, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and critiquing session on June 1 at Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Avenue, Ayala Triangle, Makati. Call 8921801.



"ADAM and Eve," by Danny S. Sillada



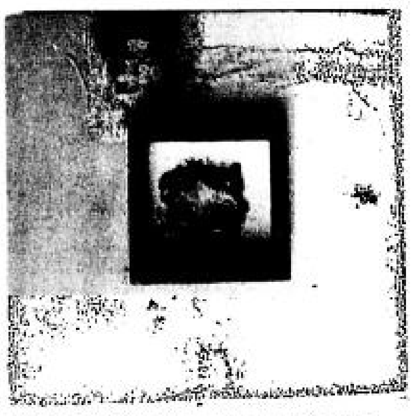
TUP artists make their mark



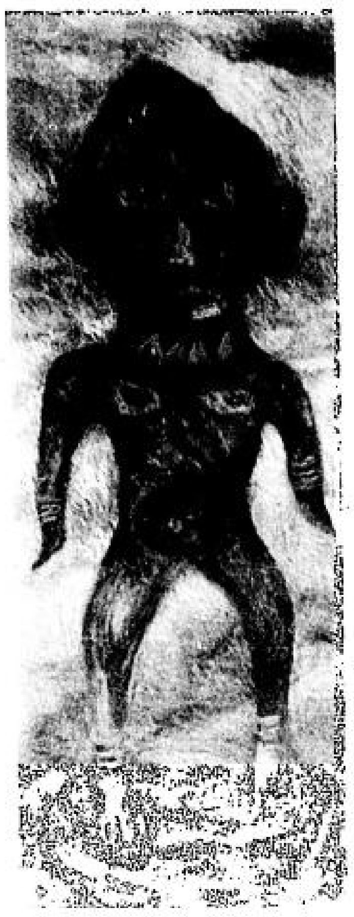
"IN TIMES of Trouble," by Lynyrd Arwyn Paras; "9-Inch Nails," by Neil Arvin Javier (right)

Young artists go against the grain

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor



"CREATION" I, by Demosthenes Campos

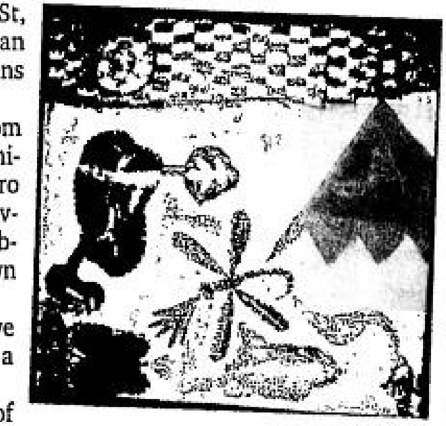


"BULUL Ricegod" I, by Joey Cobcobo

THE ART scene in our time has been dominated by images that have become predictably safe, blasé and haplessly formulaic. Since art must also provoke the viewer, tease the imagination and conquer new worlds, it is the young artist who refuses to be boxed in some kind of label or style; save perhaps for his own, an untrammeled way of exploring the unknown, of making the impossible happen, at least in the borderless reality of the canvas.

Graduates of the Technological University of the Philippines (TUP), who call themselves Unboxed Mind, are true to the spirit of the young. They have much to offer by way of conjuring amazing reflections on pained psyches and unrequited passions, and capturing this in the provocatively postmodern manner.

The five artists are Demosthenes Campos, Joey Cobcobo, Neil Arvin Javier, Lynyrd Arwyn Paras and Ryan Perez Rubio, who have teamed up in this show called "Reissue!" at the Big & Small Art Co., at 3/F, Mandara Promenade Bldg., 198 Wilson St, Greenhills, San Juan, which runs until May 19.



"SHUT Up!," by Neil Arvin Javier

Coming from various urban milieus in Metro Manila and having intimately observed their own neighborhood, these artists have formed a formidable storehouse of ideas and feelings, the most prevalent of which is the great divide between and among urban folk, insofar as compassion is concerned.

Campos, a member of Class '98, has an uncanny way of looking at icons, religious and otherwise, as he fuses good and evil in his compositions, in the same way he mixes a wide array of techniques in his work. Though he often resorts to Biblical themes, like the story of creation in Genesis, he is in fact incorporating the artist's own act of creation, and enhancing the image with a variety of techniques that defies stereotyping. His talent for printmaking (he won third prize at the 2004 Open Fine Print Competition), comes handy in the way he fleshes key details in his work, all done with remarkable intuition.

Of the five, it is Cobcobo who is the most uncompromising in his view of the contemporary global scenario that tears at the roots of cultural and ethnic heritage.

A native of Umingan, Pangasinan, and with an Igorot father who is also an OFW, Cobcobo delves into the cycle of life and death, journeys through the rites and rituals of the mountain folk with whom he identifies, and embarking on his obsessive pursuit of identity.

Richly detailed

The Grand Prize winner of the 2002 Art Petron National Painting Competition, Cobcobo works in a richly detailed style, that is neither illustration nor caricature, but more aptly expressionistic in its perspicacious crafting of figures and icons.

The oldest member, Neil Arvin Javier, a graduate of Class '93, explores the present-day Pinoy's penchant for gossip and rumor-mongering, creating a veritable tableau of idiosyncratic antics that reveals the pretenses of a media-created environment.

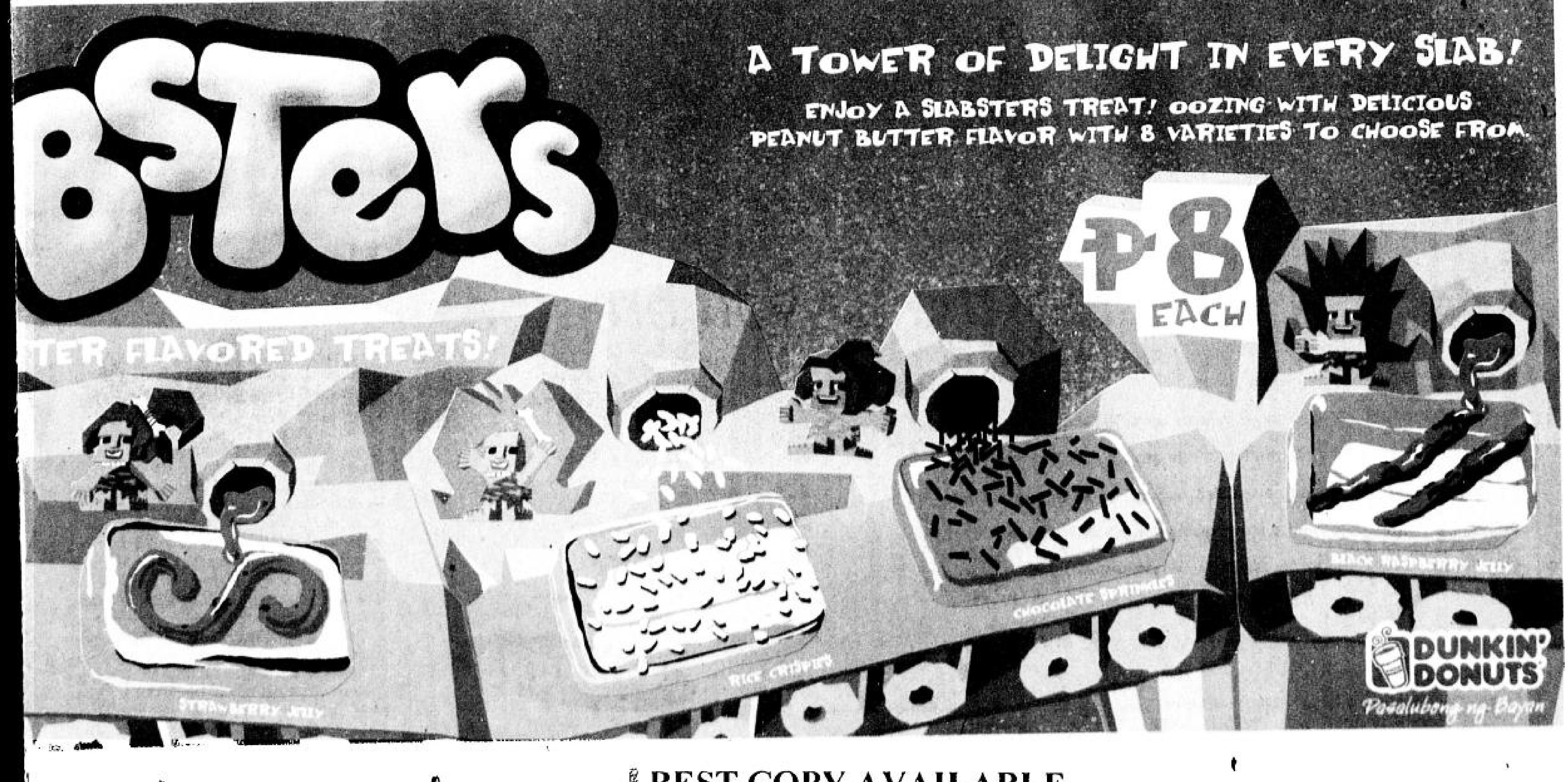
Using the running image of the chessboard as base for his satirical jabs, Javier is a trickster who dabbles in Houdini-like chicanery. One needs to examine his work at close range to decipher the welter of clues lurking in his canvases.

Lynyrd Arwyn Paras is obsessed with angst and anxiety, the postmodern world's most pervasive maladies. With lean and lithe figures, and whose faces are the very picture of solitude, his characters are seemingly trapped in a void, desperately trying to reach out, as the image of the cups of steaming coffee on deserted tables, flames suddenly lighting up a scene of melancholic sadness, souls betrayed and condemned, a hellish view of life in a world gone berserk.

The most recent graduate among the five, Ryan Perez Rubio paints in a style that is most representative of the postmodern idiom. Using images that are part real and part dreamlike, figures seemingly trapped in hypnagogic existence, Rubio conveys a surreal landscape, a disturbing exploration of contemporary identity. Wielding the brush in a markedly hypnotic mode, he creates a new dimension to portraiture, unleashing the power of subtlety and symbolism, rather than the overworked mode of figuration as it is abused by portraitists today.

This is, in its most daring mode, a truly exciting show by five young artists who also happen to be restless and imaginative. These two must be counted as a double blessing in an age of visual curses.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo @yahoo.com



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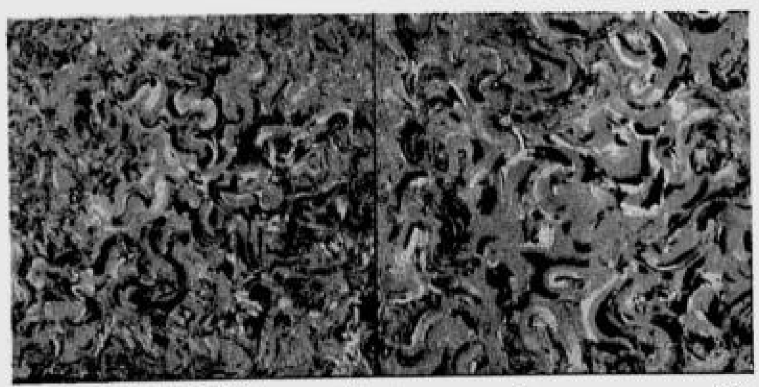
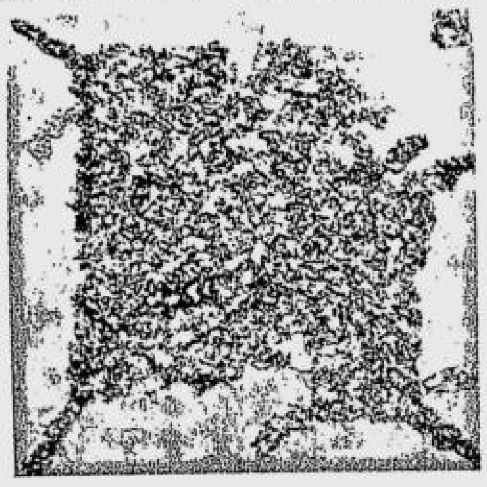
Her true colors shining through

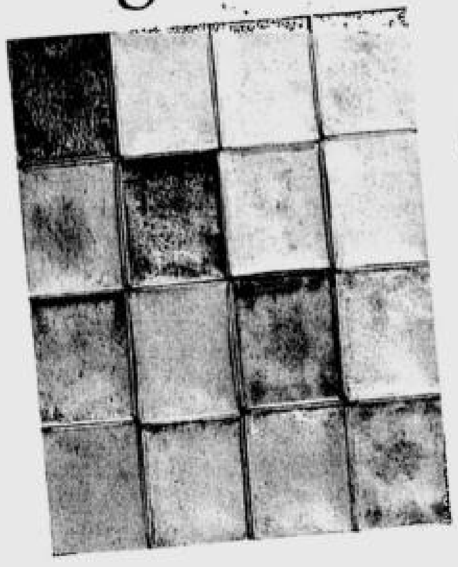
By James P. Ong
Contributor



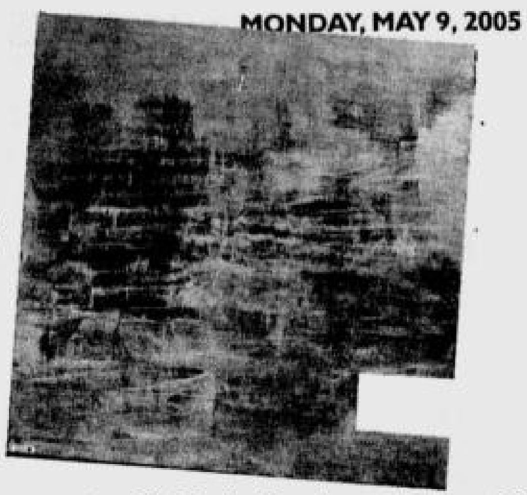
"MY COLORFUL Life"



"BEST Friends"



"TIC Tac Dough"



"MALATE Nightlife"

WHEN Mercy Gamboa began taking up painting lessons four years ago, she did so for the same reason that climbers take on Mount Everest—she wanted to do something daring and challenging. In her forties, with over 20 years of 24/7 work experience at an international bank, Gamboa needed distraction, something to keep her spirit alive and help her move on.

On Wednesday, May 11, Gamboa mounts her own solo exhibit, entitled "Impulsive," at a space which even senior artists consider daunting: SM Megamall's Art Center. Over 35 works will be on display, mostly abstract pieces on canvas, but also a few conceptual masterpieces using found objects.

The months leading to the exhibit have been tension-filled for the first-time artist. The original plan made in December was a group exhibit with Henri Cainglet, who backed out because he was flying to Berlin, and fellow newbie Bien Benitez, who opted to concentrate on an upcoming show at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Instead of faltering, however, Gamboa decided to go it alone and take on the challenge head on.

Studio

Gamboa's studio apartment in Manila, is filled with over 100 works by over 40 modern artists, both young and old. It's not the size of her collection that's impressive, though; it's that it took her only two years to acquire it.

When she was into her collecting phase, "I would go to three or four galleries a day—every day," she remembers. "When I got home I would research about the artist and stay up to the wee hours of the morning on the Internet to understand what his works are about." Her first major purchase was a Gus Albor. Art became a passion.

What drew her to it? Partly she was influenced by good friend Benitez who, like her, was looking for something to do after coming back to Manila from a working stint abroad. He was a lawyer in Taiwan, she was based with a leading international bank in Singapore.

"I'm super hyper. I needed to re-channel my energies into something productive and creative," she explains. "I took all sorts of lessons-from web design, flower arrangement, etc." She also handled the design and photography of Flor Tarriela and Maur Lichauco's book, "Oops Don't Throw Those Weeds Away." It was her first time to do photography. "Then Bien suggested we study painting," she remembers.

After finishing a short course, she took off for nine months to the United States and Europe to search her soul. "I wanted to think of what I really wanted to do," she recalls. "When I got back I was still painting, but it was *bitin* because they were just workshops." At an art exhibit, she approached the featured artists and asked for private lessons. Last summer, she also took a course at the UP Fine Arts.

Gallery ban

Gamboa instituted a self-imposed ban on art galleries when she started preparing for her exhibit. "I didn't want to be unconsciously influenced by the works of other artists," she explains.

Surrounded by her two dachshunds (which she portrays in "Best Friends") and one labrador retriever, the neophyte artist would start painting at six in the morning until sunset. She also stopped partying. In her art, she applied the same focus, commitment and diligence she used to at her former job.

The show reveals a fresh, promising talent. Curated by UP professor Ruben Defeo, "Impulsive" is out to inspire those who've had doubts about pursuing alternative careers or finding a new pursuit in midlife. Her works are a mix of colors—predominantly black, white, silver and earth.

"My paintings are done with spontaneity and passion. They are conscious efforts to gear away from structure, from the process-driven training I had as a banker and do something free-flowing, unpredictable and raw," she explains.

In "My Colorful Life," she uses colors with abandon. Swirls of red, yellow and green mix to evoke festive feel. According to Gamboa, she drew inspiration from the things around her, as well as travel and experience. "Bohemian Malate also has done a lot to awaken my creative spirit," she says.

She also incorporates found objects in her works. In "Tic-Tac-Dough," she uses baking pans, and xylophone bars in "Let The Music Play."

"From corporate life, I see myself roaming the streets of Manila and scouring the junkyards. I see beauty and art in those rusty metals and have incorporated them in my works," she says.

It may have been on impulse that Gamboa took up painting, but she says she has seriously taken to the art. "It is through this medium of expression and communication that I have achieved a state of fulfillment," she declares.

Hiroshima's

From page D1

After his tenure as dean of the College of Architecture at the University of the Philippines, Fernandez joined the GSIS Museum before assuming the directorship of the Makiling Arts Center in Los Baños, a post he held until his untimely passing last week.

A staunch nationalist committed to the preservation of all aspects of Philippine heritage, Hony was a guiding force in the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and an active participant in its programs.

The large number of friends, colleagues and students who paid homage to Fernandez as he lay in state at the UP College of Architecture and at the necrological services held by his colleagues in the College of Fellows of the United Architects of the Philippines, the NCCA and the Cultural Center of the Philippines were testimony to his profound influence and contribution to the architecture, arts and culture legacy of the Philippines.

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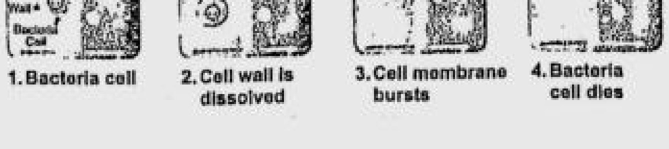

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2. Cell wall is dissolved
3. Cell membrane bursts
4. Bacteria cell dies

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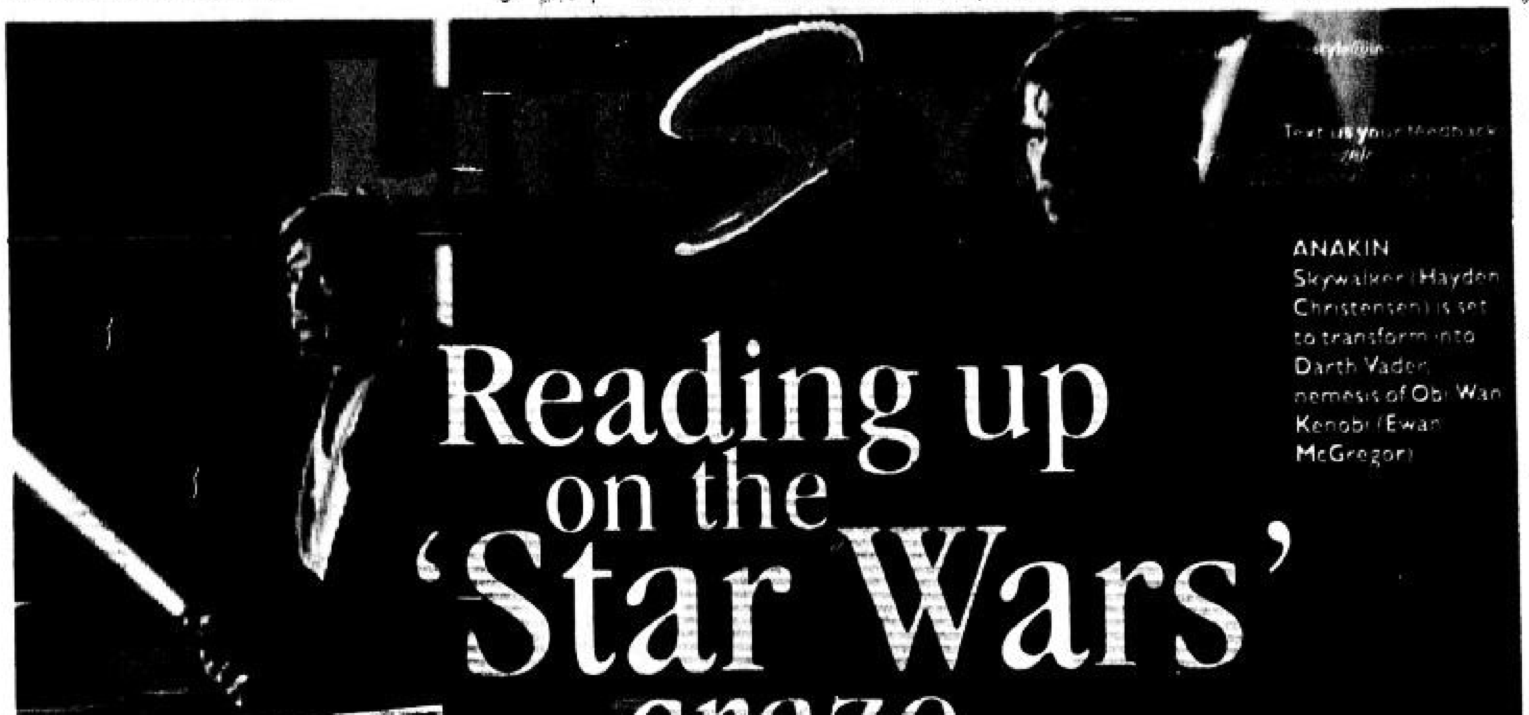
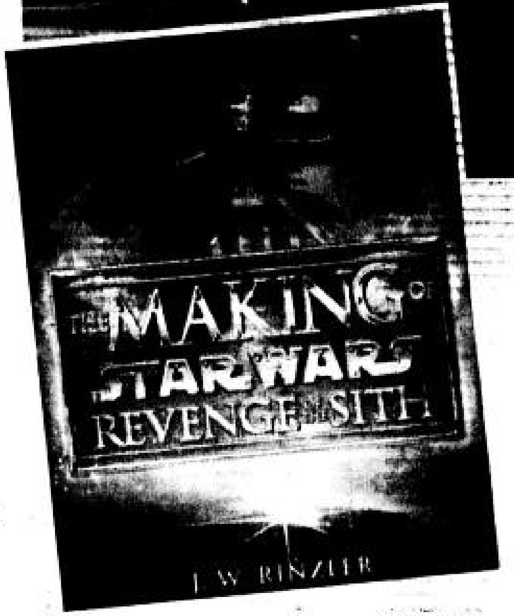


Reading up on the 'Star Wars' craze

ANAKIN Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) is set to transform into Darth Vader, nemesis of Obi Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor)



"Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith"
By Matthew Stover
Based on the Story and Screenplay by George Lucas
Lucas Books, New York,
2005, 420 pages

"The Art of Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith"
By J. W. Rinzler
Lucas Books, New York
2005, 224 pages

"The Making of Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith"
By J. W. Rinzler
Lucas Books, New York
2005, 224 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

LIKE an armada of Star Destroyers homing on the outgunned Rebel Blockade Runners, the merchandising machine of the "Star Wars" movies arrives in full force with the impending May 19 invasion by "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith."

Deservedly considered by many as the coup de grace to the definitive space opera, indeed, sci-fi movie series of all time, "Sith" arrives almost three decades after visionary George Lucas first used the Force in 1977's "Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope," and 10 years after Lucas revisited the Skywalker family in 1995's "Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace," the first of three prequels.

Now, the final prequel is here and though many audience members, whether fans or not, are quite familiar with what is supposed to happen in "Sith," (Jedi Annakin Skywalker becomes Sith Lord Darth Vader, the Empire rises, etc.), the key to "Sith" is how all those events come to pass. Readers be warned: picking up and reading any of the "Episode III" books instantly unleashes spoilers; they cannot be avoided.

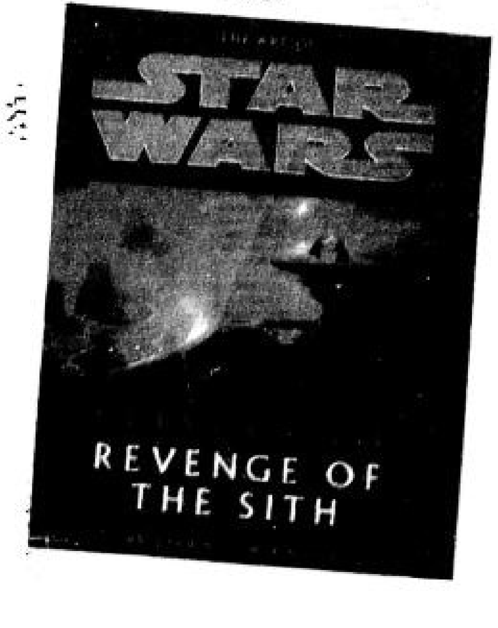
That being said, there are no secrets kept in Matthew Stover's novelization of "Sith." The veteran "Star Wars" novelist takes up the light saber after excellent previous novelizations by Terry Brooks (the "Shannara" books) and R.A. Salvatore (the "Dark Elf" series), as the last two "Episode" novels were actually better than the movies.

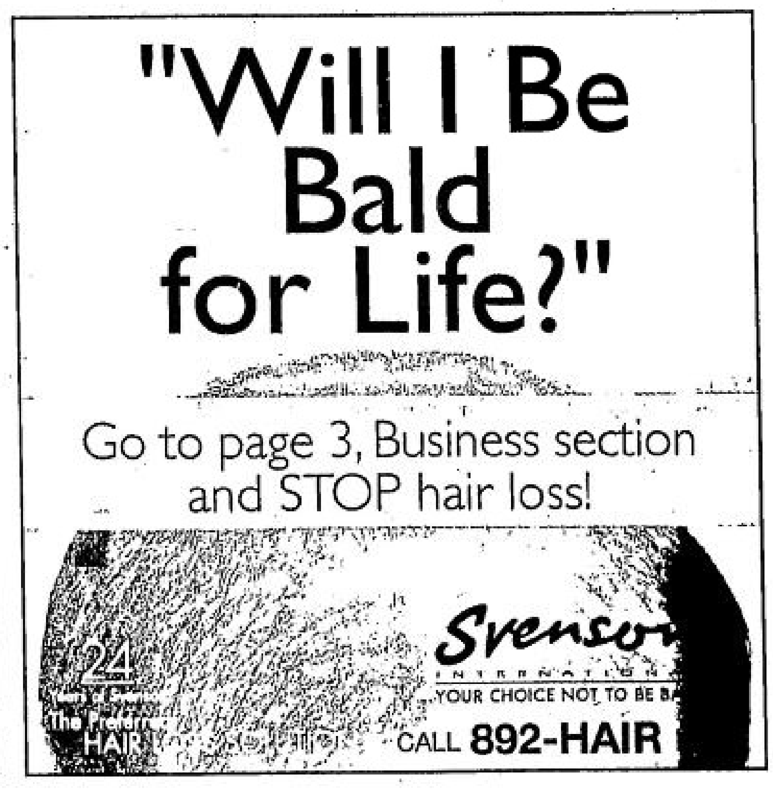
The ability to expand on Lucas's story and dialogue-limited screenplays, notably the capacity for getting inside the characters' heads and turning the narrative towards a more literary direction, make these superb reads on their own. Clone troopers, they are most certainly not.

The best

That being said, Stover's "Sith" novel is by far the best of the three prequel novels.

READING/E3

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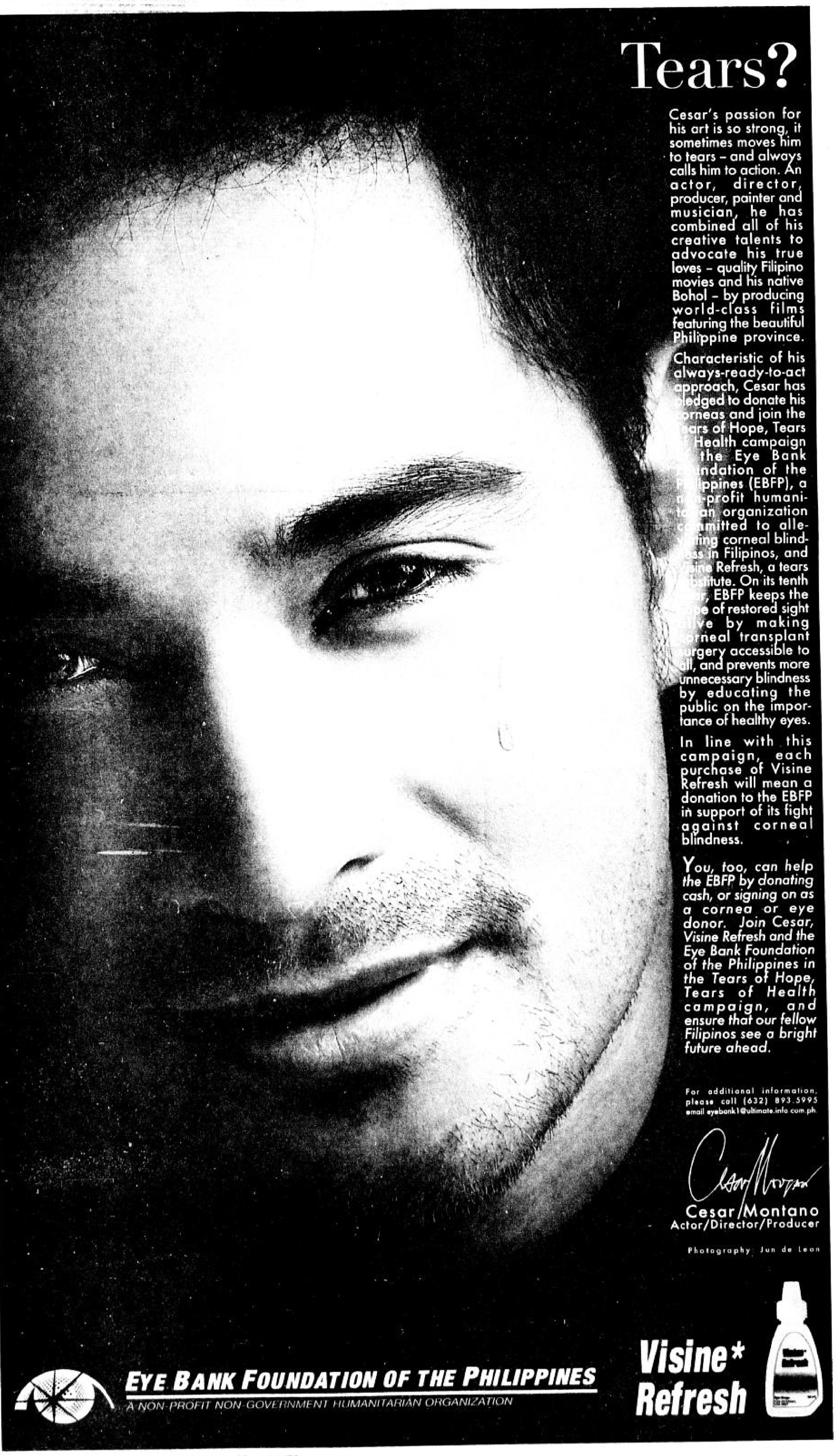
Tears?

Cesar's passion for his art is so strong, it sometimes moves him to tears – and always calls him to action. An actor, director, producer, painter and musician, he has combined all of his creative talents to advocate his true loves – quality Filipino movies and his native Bohol – by producing world-class films featuring the beautiful Philippine province.

Characteristic of his always-ready-to-act approach, Cesar has pledged to donate his corneas and join the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You, too, can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Cesar, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

For additional information, please call (632) 893.5995
email eyebank1@ultimate.info.com.ph

Cesar Montano
Cesar/Montano
Actor/Director/Producer

Photography: Jun de Leon

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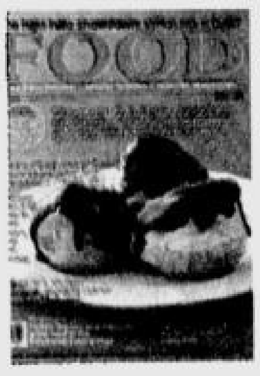

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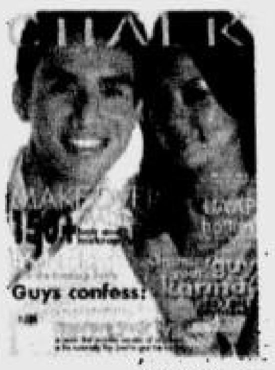

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Best sources for vintage lumber

Best mags this May

IN THE MAY issue of Food Magazine, learn how to make four classic dessert favorites using just one basic dough. Your family will love the cream puffs, *profiteroles*, chocolate éclairs and friend *bunuelos* from easy-to-follow recipes created by Food's desserts columnist Dorothy Ferreria.

Working Mom's Mother's Month issue provides tips on how to raise happy kids and how to recover from ugly rumors.

Subscribe to Working Mom now for only P750. That's 40-percent savings plus a gift pack from Rustan's Essenses. Call 4152272 local 4658.

Chalk brings you a feature on two of the hottest young celebrities, Christian Bautista and Bianca Gonzalez. They answer your questions on life, school and love.

The Buzz "magasin" provides show-biz updates. Will Nora Aunor end up in jail? Is the onscreen romance of Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo for real?

Thinking of building a house or enhancing your garden? Metro Home and Entertaining presents two popular dealers where you can get unique materials such as exquisitely carved wooden doors and wrought-iron grills or even *calado* wood pieces used in old houses. Plus, 16 gifts for your weekend hosts, a primer on household electricity and a guide to create murals for your children's room.

StarStudio, the largest circulated magazine in the Philippines, brings readers its "Love Album Special," which has more than 165 of never-before-seen photos of the country's hottest real and reel couples.

The magazines are published by ABS-CBN Publishing and are available nationwide.

Auditions for 'Footloose'

STAGES, sister company of Trumpets, is holding auditions for its upcoming production of the Broadway hit musical "Footloose" on May 15, 2-8 p.m., at Trumpets Playshop, 5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City.

Auditions are open to the following: 1) Young males and females, in their late teens or early 20s, who can sing, act and dance; 2) Adult males and females, ages 30 and above, who can sing, act and dance.

Interested parties must come prepared with a song (a capella or with a minus one) and must be ready to dance.

Be part of the musical that immortalized songs like the theme "Footloose," "Let's Hear It For The Boy," "I Need A Hero," and "Almost Paradise." Featuring high-energy dancing and "The Prince of R&B" Jay-R in the lead role, "Footloose" is definitely one of the most-awaited theatrical events of the year.

Call 8181111 local 209 or 218, or e-mail at stages_pr@i-manila.com.ph

Compulsive reading fare

Philippine travel

THE NATIONAL PARKS PHILIPPINES
Philippines
Fodor's

The Pearl of the Orient is yours to explore in this great collection of books from National Book Store.

"The National Parks and Other Wild Places in the Philippines," "Fodor's Pocket Philippines," and "Philippines from Lonely Planet" are great tour companions to our wonderful country. Filled with information and images vital to any tour package, these books make it easy to decide what exotic Filipino locale to visit next.

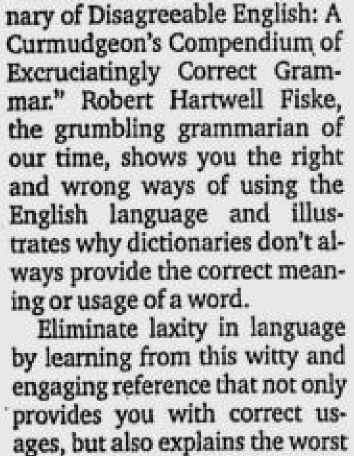
Great food in 30 minutes or less

In "Rachael Ray's 30-Minute Get Real Meals," this best-selling cookbook author and Food Network star serves up another helping of creative, hassle-free recipes that are ready to rock your taste buds in less than 30 minutes. The latest addition to Rachael's runaway-hit series of 30-Minute Meals cookbooks is designed for cooks who want to look and feel great but long for the fun and the flavor that's missing from their extremely low-carb meals.

Learning painfully precise grammar

Obsessive-compulsive grammar teachers and speakers will love this comprehensive dictionary of common grammar abuses, known as "The Dictionary of Disagreeable English: A Curmudgeon's Compendium of Excruciatingly Correct Grammar." Robert Hartwell Fiske, the grumbling grammarian of our time, shows you the right and wrong ways of using the English language and illustrates why dictionaries don't always provide the correct meaning or usage of a word.

Eliminate laxity in language by learning from this witty and engaging reference that not only provides you with correct usages, but also explains the worst malapropian sins of public figures and major publications.



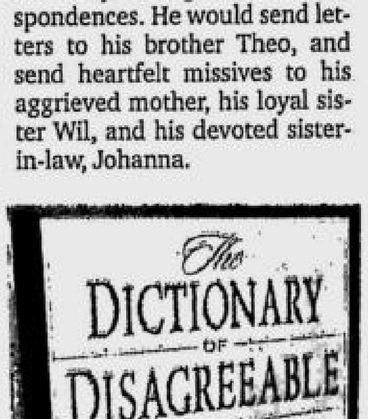
Van Gogh's Women

Get a closer look at the life and love of this genius who gave us priceless masterpieces throbbing with emotion and passion in "Van Gogh's Women."

Vincent van Gogh declared his love to many a woman: a heartless prostitute named Sien; shy, spinsterish Margot Begemann; a widowed first cousin Kee; and the 17-year-old peasant girl Stien de Groot.

But none of them would be a wife with which to form the emotional bond that he so perfectly imagined and ardently desired.

Art historian Derek Fell recounts in this biography the way Vincent describes his romantic yearning in his correspondences. He would send letters to his brother Theo, and send heartfelt missives to his aggrieved mother, his loyal sister Wil, and his devoted sister-in-law, Johanna.


The DICTIONARY OF DISAGREEABLE ENGLISH
A CURMUDGEON'S COMPENDIUM OF EXCRUCIATINGLY CORRECT GRAMMAR
ROBERT HARTWELL FISKE

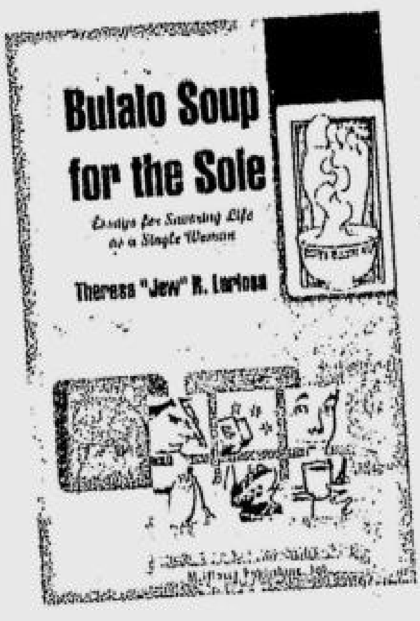
Encyclopedia of techniques

Budding craftsmen and casual hobbyists of virtually any art or trade can get great tips on their crafting techniques from the "Encyclopedia of Techniques Series." Covering a variety of crafts such as mosaics, bookbinding, jewelry-making, and even candle-making, this series is a great way to boost your skills.

The book is chock-full of useful information and easy-to-follow, step-by-step information (all illustrated, of course) on how to learn the trade of your choice. It also features a wide range of designs and works done by professional artisans to inspire practitioners to new creative heights.

Available at National Book Store

Essays for the single woman



MILFLORES Publishing Inc, has released "Bulalo Soup for the Sole: Essays for Savoring Life as a Single Woman," the first book by Theresa "Jew" R. Lariosa.

The life of Filipinas who choose to remain single but who also strive to live full lives is far from being as boring as a cup of warm chicken soup—the kind of ho-hum life advocated by those insipid little guidebooks that think all adults should remain children forever.

This large thought drives the short, ironic, funny, and thoughtful essays in the book that are all about the confusion, fears, heartbreaks, joys, fulfillment, triumphs, and the gamut of other emotions experienced by young single Filipinas. The essays are also about life in general and how to acquire the courage to savor it to the fullest.

The writing is as honest as direct sunlight. It opens up the author's young life thus far to the reader with little regard for image or convention. Female and male readers alike will find these frank personal essays rewarding reading for both their refreshingly indomitable spirit born of youth and their hard-won reflections on the meanings of life.

The author earned her degree in communication arts from the De La Salle University. She currently works as a corporate communications specialist in a multinational corporation.

The cover and funny illustrations were done by Aletheia Rio, a recent fine arts graduate from the U.P. in Diliman, Quezon City.

"Bulalo Soup for the Sole: Essays for Savoring Life as a Single Woman" is available at all National Book Stores, PowerBooks, Books for Less and other major book stores at P350 per copy.

Call 7216431 or e-mail milflores@pacific.net.ph

Pinoy odyssey in Australia

By Abundio Alolod
Contributor

"Filipino Legacy in Australia" (2005,) by Reynaldo Dante G. Juanta, O.A.M. Philippine Normal University Press, Taft Avenue, Manila

Filipino Legacy IN AUSTRALIA
by R. Dante G. Juanta, OAM, Ed.D.

THOSE of us whose souls vibrate with love and pride of the country every time we sing "this is my own, my native land," and who, throughout our lives, have never missed its sweet hours, can only learn and feel vicariously the depth of pain from those who miss this land while in a foreign land. We learned it early in our schooling through Rizal especially in his poem, "To the Flowers of Heidelberg," while in Europe; we learn it now from OFWs and relatives. The refrain has become widespread. We love our country more when we experience being away from it.

But love of country is more than feeling. It is best expressed in what we do after feeling it. We must express our love in action. Paraphrasing Kahlil Gibran, it is in work that we make love visible.

"Filipino Legacy in Australia" is a collection of essays that narrates how the author's love of country was made visible by his concrete works for the benefit of Filipino expatriates in Australia. The impact of his works also made the Philippines noticed more in Australia ever since, especially in its southern part where Adelaide is, his home base.

Message of love

This subliminal message of love makes one more excited to go on reading the book and will find the experience rewarding in many ways. There are many lessons to draw from it.

Those who dream about success will find in his stories many of its secrets in the book. One is to live according to Filipino values and maxims. One maxim well illustrated for its efficacy is: *"Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan."* Thus we see how valuable it is to preserve Filipino legacies.

The book is a handy companion. Students and academics can make it an instant reference on Philippine history, culture, language, geography and issues commonly discussed in their circles. The OFWs will no longer feel alone in a foreign soil. They need only seek their *kababayans* through network of sources and work hand in hand with them to establish a Filipino community for mutual protection and other purposes.

Community builders in our land can draw many ideas to enrich community life and make Filipino culture a strong basis for our identity as a people.

One may not agree with some of the author's viewpoints, his observations, his silence on Rizal as the most outstanding Filipino, his optimism for a better future of the country in the face of social injustices visible everywhere in the country and the patent insincerity of post-martial law leaders.

But doing what he did for his fellow expatriates in his adopted country speaks of a kind of leader this country needs. He is the kind of person we need to produce more in our country, the kind of leader to inspire us. Alas in our country, we will never have his kind elected by the type of voters and electoral process that we have.

Small as it may be, the book has potentials to spark big ideas for mankind's benefit. The reader with imagination can take it as a fountainhead of ideas and inspiration for the betterment of life, wherever he chooses to live and make a difference in the world.

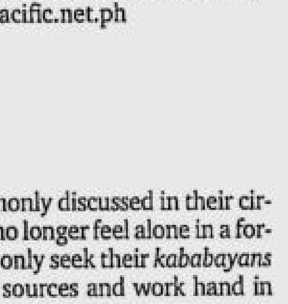
New titles from Ateneo

GREGORIO C. Brillantes, award-winning essayist and fictionist, gathers pieces on Jose Rizal and the Jesuits, Ferdinand Marcos and Ninoy Aquino, Our Lady of Fatima and Miss Saigon, traffic, language, garbage, and other subjects in a volume called "The Cardinal's Sins, the General's Cross, the Martyr's Testimony, and other Affirmations."

In "On the Subject of the Nation: Filipino Writings from the Margins, 1981 to 2004," scholar Caroline S. Hau continues her close reading of fiction and nonfiction in the light of two historical phenomena that have irrevocably shaped people's lives in this part of the world: revolution and migration. Among the works she looks at are Robert Francis Garcia's "To Suffer Thy Comrades," Bai Ren's "Nanyang Piaoliuji," Peter Bacho's "Cebu," and Rey Ventura's "Underground in Japan."

"Ang Singsing ng Dalagang Marmol" by Isabelo de los Reyes and "Ipaghiganti Mo Ako" by Precioso Palma is a double-novel collection that tackles love in the context of overpowering ambition and revolution. Honor, reason and freedom are also threshed out by these two late-19th-century writers who were both socially involved artists as well: De los Reyes founded the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and was first president of the historic Union Obrera Democratica, while Palma headed the Aklatang Bayan aside from being a journalist. The collection comes with a critical introduction by Soledad Reyes.

"Sa Ngalan ng Diyos" by Faustino S. Aguilar is a novel that revolves around the insidious hold that religion may have over people and aspects of religious faith that can destroy their state of mind. The critical introduction by Roberto Añonuevo also discusses the concept of Bonifacio and Jacinto's Katipunan which the novel tackles as well. Aguilar was a novelist, newspaperman, and a union leader in his time.



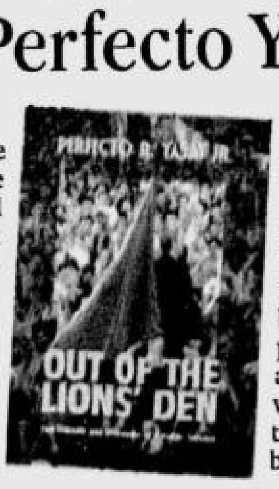
These books may be ordered from Popular (tel. 3722162), Solidaridad (5230870) or the Ateneo Press (4265984; unipress@admu.edu.ph)

New Day releases Perfecto Yasay memoirs

FORMER Securities and Exchange Commission chair Perfecto "Jun" Yasay Jr. recently launched his book, "Out of the Lions' Den, The Travails and Triumphs of a Public Servant."

The 222-page book contains the memoirs of the SEC chief during his stint at the regulatory agency.

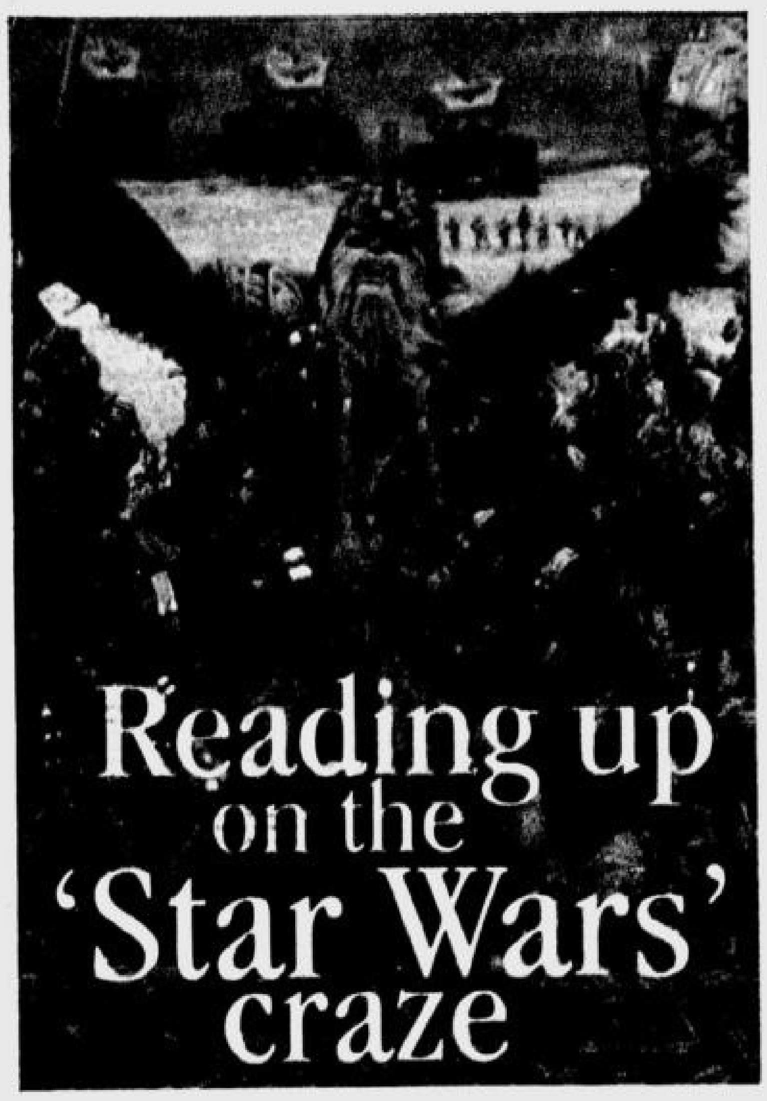
Titled after the Biblical experience of prophet Daniel under Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, the book recounts the many instances when he crossed swords with then President Joseph Estrada in the latter's attempt to gag him and force his resignation.



"The lesson is quite simple: it is good to have money and all the things that money can buy, but it is better to pause once in a while and find out whether we still have the things that money can never buy—such things as character, self-respect, genuine love of country, peace of soul and joy beyond human understanding," said former Senate President Jovito Salonga in the foreword.

"Out of the Lions' Den" is published by New Day Publishers and is available in hard-bound and soft-bound editions. Call 9288046 or 9275982 or e-mail newdayorders@edsamail.com.ph

Reading up on the 'Star Wars' craze



JEDI masters plot their move.

THE TROUBLED Anakin (Christensen) with Padme Amidala (Natalie Portman)

A novel, a behind-the-scenes look and an art book add interstellar fuel to the bright flame that is the forthcoming 'Star Wars' epic, 'Revenge of the Sith'

From page E1

Dark, poetic and at times seemingly making more overt departures from the movie's events to zoom in on peripheral but no less important developments, "Sith" focuses on the grand themes of the fall of the Jedi and the transformation of Skywalker into Vader:

"This story happened a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. It is already over. Nothing can be done to change it... This is the Twilight of the Jedi. The end starts now."

While many audience members await the fate of Skywalker and Padme Amidala, Stover's textured, inspired chronicle of the Jedi's fall is the most powerful aspect of this engaging novel. It remains to be seen if it, like its pedigreed predecessors, is superior to the movie.

But for those who are seeking more knowledge regarding the actual creation of the third prequel, LucasFilm senior editor J.W. Rinzler effectively provides a blueprint for the movie's making with his two books, "The Making of Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith," and "The Art of Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith."

A friendly, accessible writer, Rinzler puts a lot of effort into the dense yet fascinating "Making," producing a voluminous, detailed production diary that closely follows the movie's 55 days of principal photography, as well as the interminable preproduction and tense postproduction.

"Making" also gives fascinating insight into Lucas's unique work habits, his vision and his power. For example, Lucas uniquely does not give a script to the artists before the actual shooting; he effectively makes it up as he goes along and works his "Force" mojo in the editing room and shooting additional photography if needed.

A SCENE from "Revenge of the Sith"

Trivia

Aside from the connections to the original "Star Wars" trilogy, Rinzler also hands out quite a bit of trivia, such as the fact that original actors Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca) and Anthony Daniels (C-3PO) return to their roles, and that Steven Spielberg actually helped Lucas work on this movie.

There are rehearsals for lightsaber duels, costume tests for Vader, even recording sessions for Yoda. "Making" is so packed, it even includes factoids, a separate timeline for production and all sorts of visual Easter eggs: production photos, conceptual art and even scans of Lucas's draft screenplay along with handwritten notes.

Readers can see the evolution of the story until Lucas decided the end product was "Fabuluoso."

Design-wise, "Art" provides the look of the movie, with Rinzler using minimal narrative to escort design work from a whole battalion of artists. This is the visual equivalent of the "Making" book, as readers can see the characters, costumes, vehicles and settings evolve.

Taking their cue from the pioneering work of original trilogy artists Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston, conceptual artists Ryan Church and Erik Tiemens, costume designer Trisha Biggar and production designer Gavin Bocquet, among others, offer a dazzling array of art that is reproduced in crisp color on glossy paper stock.

See the amazing splash art for the seven planets as well as the concepts for a young Han Solo and the changing look of villain Grievous.

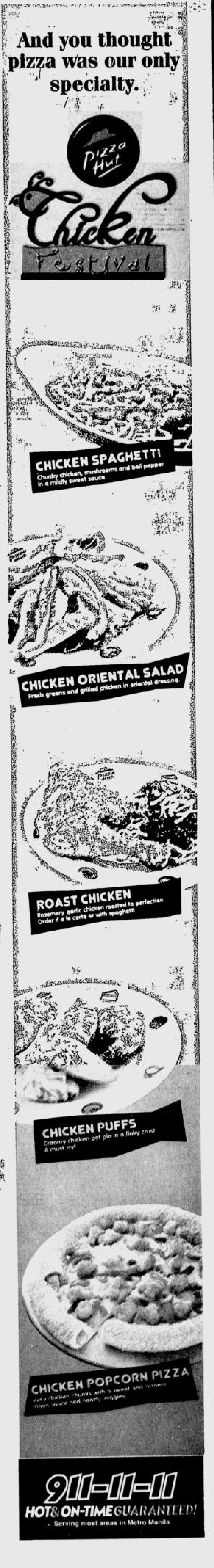
Part handsome coffee-table book and part technical manual, "Art" is the more technically hardcore of the three books, highlighting the influence of digital and computer technology-though it also celebrates the creativity of Star Wars' crew of artists.

These three books provide different things for "Sith" fans: visual guides and impressive eye candy for "Art," a gripping, well-written story for "Sith" and an unprecedented look at the majesty and complexity of modern film making for "Making." All these are of course linked to this fateful offering from the true Jedi master, George Lucas, the final in this most celebrated of sci-fi movies.

No mind tricks here, just different reading experiences for you; meanwhile, inexorably, that "Star Wars" theme keeps playing in your head as you turn these pages. And turn these pages, you will.

Available at National Bookstore and PowerBooks.

MASTER Yoda returns in the third and final prequel.



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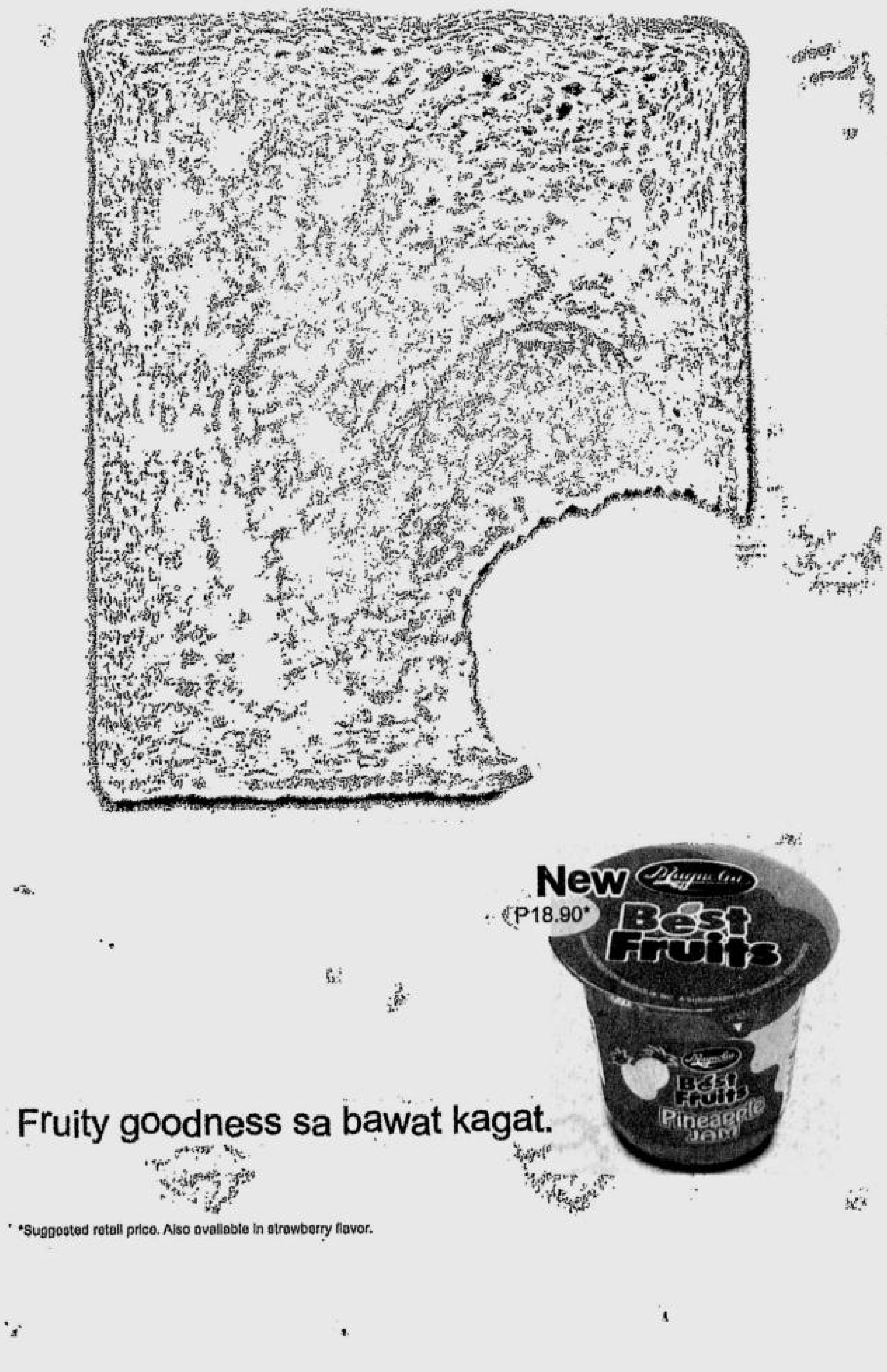

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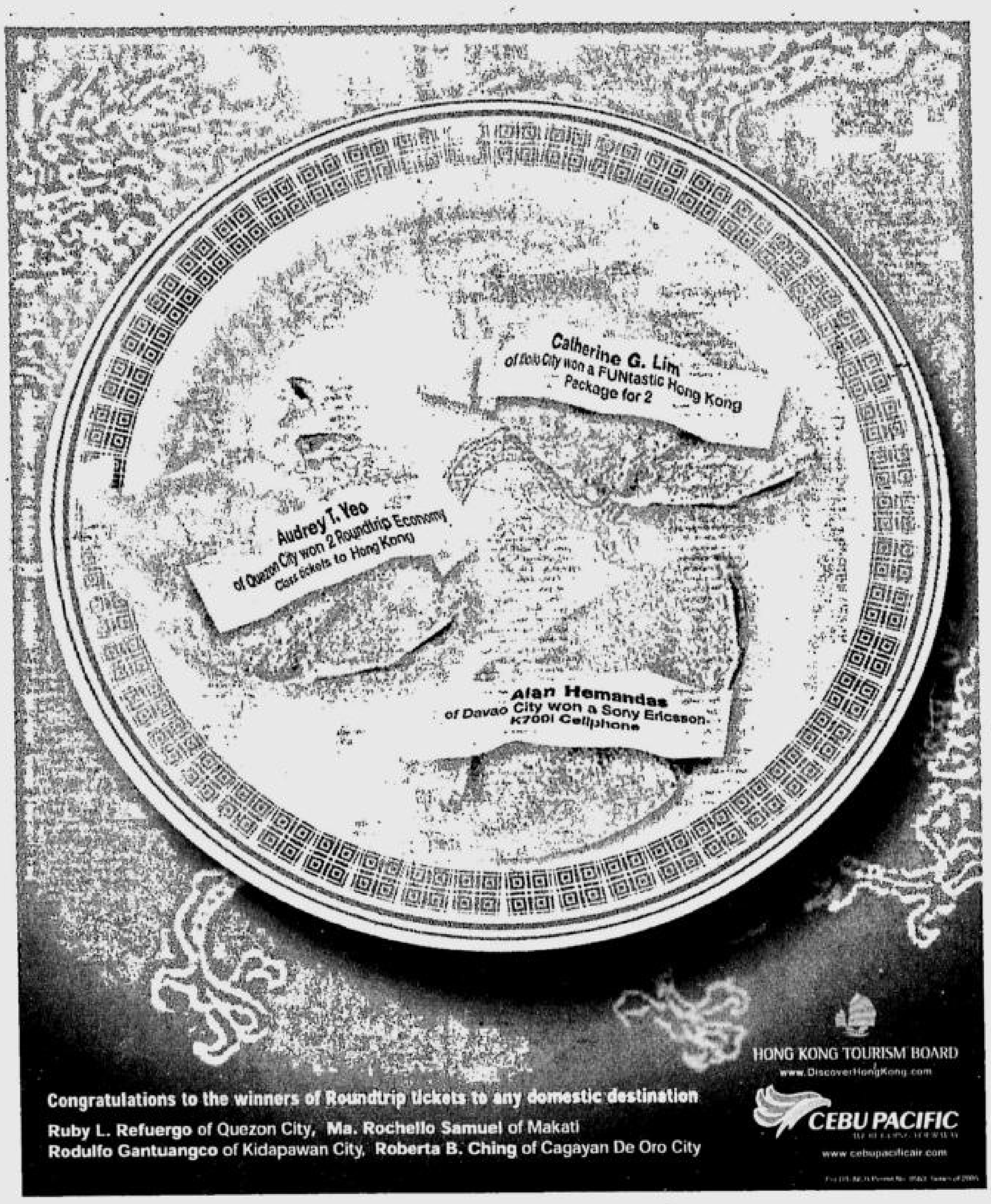
Catherine G. Lim
of Iloilo City won a FUNtastic Hong Kong Package for 2
Audrey T. Yeo
of Quezon City won 2 Roundtrip Economy Class tickets to Hong Kong
Alan Hemandas
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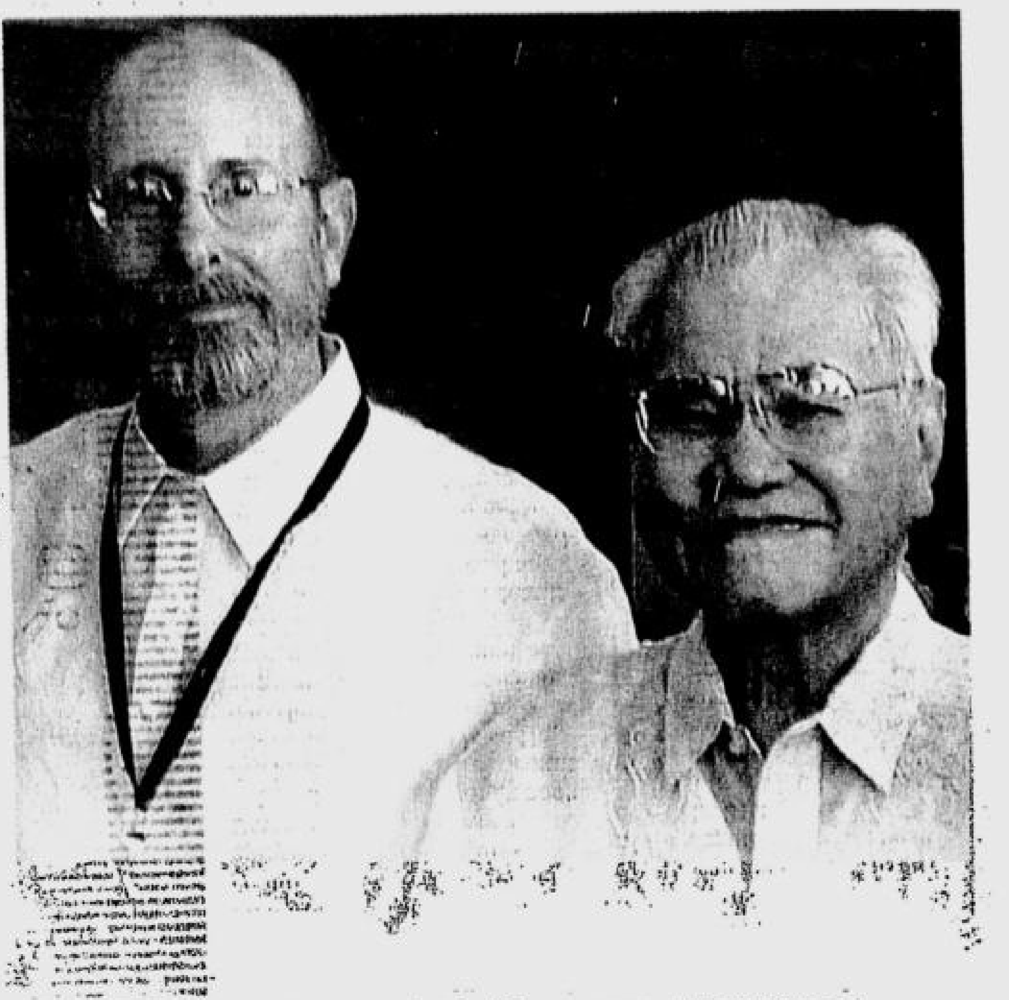


THE MEETING between two coconut authorities a year ago, author-naturopath Bruce Fife (dubbed Dr. Coconut in the lecture circuit), and pharmacologist Conrado Dayrit, author of the first clinical study on coconut oil's benefits on HIV patients, produced the book sequel, "Coconut Cures."

Author of book on **coconut cures** embarks on Philippine lecture tour

By Cesar C. Villariba
Contributor

IN THE 1990s, Filipino pharmacologist Dr. Conrado Dayrit tested coconut oil on 14 patients, from ages 22-38, with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). After six months of treatment, the viral load of nine patients had decreased. Eleven had gained weight and appeared to be improving when the underfunded study ended. It was to be the first clinical study confirming anecdotal reports that coconut oil has anti-HIV effects.

The study excited the research world for coconut oil's preventative possibilities but lay buried from public knowledge by Big Business' anti-tropical oils campaign—until American naturopath and nutritionist Bruce Fife brought it and all other hidden studies into a readable book, "The Healing Miracles of Coconut Oil," which is creating ripples in the natural nutrition scene.

With his book now well into its fourth edition, retitled "Coconut Oil Miracles," with over 33,000 copies sold, Fife sees a country, which used to be the world's number one coconut oil exporter, getting back its health again.

Fife has put together more recent anecdotal claims and dramatic testimonials attributed to the coconut from all over the world, some of which he gathered from his first visit to the country last year, into a sequel aptly titled "Coconut Cures." Dayrit writes the foreword.

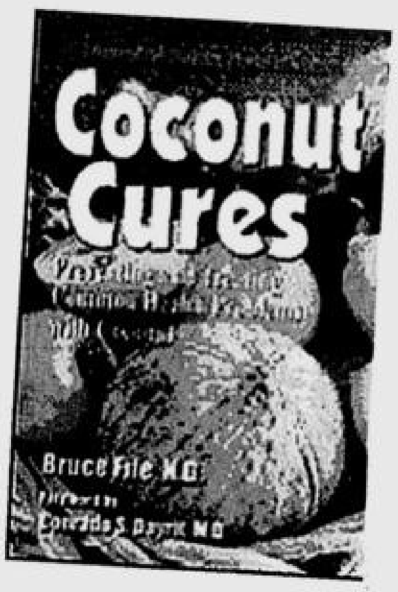
Dr. Fife's follow-through book discloses that the entire coconut is a virtual medicine chest. He describes coconut meat, milk and water as having medicinal as well as nutritional value, a truly functional food.

For instance, the book details why coconut water is used not just as a delicious beverage loaded with vitamins and minerals but as an IV (intravenous) solution for sick patients.

For this reason, coconut water is fast gaining a reputation as an effective natural sports drink, superior to commercial beverages and lower in sugar.

The coconut's healing properties known in Philippine folk medicine, are most evident when taken orally to dissolve kidney stones.

He describes coconut meat as a virtual powerhouse of health that can help balance blood sugar and control diabetes, protect against cancer, ease the pain and discomfort of colitis and irritable bowel syndrome, aid in weight loss, expel intestinal parasites, improve digestive function, help eliminate hemorrhoids and varicose veins. The list goes on and on.



"Coconut Cures" is an extensive A to Z listing of how to treat health problems using various forms of coconut.

Manila homecoming

Bruce Fife returns to the country today until May 21.

Since his last visit, Fife has encouraged local producers to develop cold-pressing techniques, from community level to continuous production, to meet increasing demand for what he calls "the health food of the 21st century."

The coconut advocate has helped local virgin coconut oil producers and traders who have banded together into the Virgin Coconut Oil Producers and Traders Association, known as VCO Philippines, in setting quality standards for virgin coconut oil that can measure up to its renewed reputation as the health oil for the 21st century.

The tour is a joint project of VCO Philippines and the Philippine Coconut Authority under the Department of Agriculture with support from Citem, Natural Products Division.

On May 14, local nutrition, health and medical practitioners will have an opportunity to clarify medical claims the author mentions in his books at a symposium which begins at 8 a.m. at the Traders Hotel on Roxas Blvd.

Bruce Fife will be joined by Leslie Fife, cardiologist Conrado Dayrit, dermatologist Vermen Verallo-Rowell and Fabian Dayrit in a roundtable talk and presentation of scientific studies on "Why Coconut Cures."

On May 15, Fife will be at the World Trade Center during the BioSearch/ Ifex exhibitions to give a talk at 10 am. He will also be available for book signing afterwards.

On May 17, he will meet virgin coconut oil producers from Bacolod and Iloilo. On May 20, he will lecture in Kalibo, Aklan.

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- 3x optical zoom
- 3.2x digital zoom
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